



FAMOUS
MONSTERS
OF FILMLAND

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FAMOUS

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A DYNACOMM PUBLICATION

MEL BROOKS
TALKS ABOUT
DRACULA:
DEAD and
LOVING IT!

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ON THE SET OF
FRANKENSTEIN!

A MAN OF MANY PARTS:

WILLIAM
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THE PUB LISH ERS CRYPT

Four years & 11 (now 12) issues ago, when we started this newsletter of FM's weirdos in the better that it was—a unique institution—a magical, mystical and fun-filled celebration of the world of excess horror. All our efforts have gone into keeping the spirit of FM's golden age alive for everyone who enjoyed it years ago and especially for the new fans who might have otherwise missed out on these treasures of filmdom.

This has not been an easy task, having had to juggle an inane-spoke aesthetics—from amateur dabblers who didn't think anything could be interesting in a magazine about old movie reviews/20s maintaining only the highest quality in our pages even under pressure to accommodate responsive contributions even from V.I.P. contributors. Thanks to your enthusiastic support, this content & style of these pages will forever—exactly as they have been. The articles, books & special goodies you have enjoyed these last 2 years have been contributed largely by authors noted FM names (that you'll get to know better with continuing columns) who are committed to keeping "the continue case" and will be sharing more terror treasure with you in issues to come. My commitment is that the spirit of FM's golden age will remain undimmed in these mellowed halls. We hereinafter resolve: Oh Acolytes, we must!

Speaking of Golden Age Horrorwood, we received a communication from Gary Karoff recently expressing concern over that, although the U.S. Post Office has received a sufficient number of letters to give permission to continue to issuing stampless horripiling Frankenstein, Dracula & The Wolf Man as American legends (something we're quite proud to have helped instill), they are leaning toward featuring only the characters without highlighting the actors who made them legends—Karloff, Lugosi & DeMille. Please write to THE CITIZENS' FILM ADVISORY COMMITTEE, UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE, 495 LEEHAN PLAZA, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20003-4757 and request that the Muster Communicative Beings be sure to acknowledge these beloved performers, since a tribute to the monsters without their cinematic souls would be incomplete.

As always your questions and comments are welcome. For a personal reply please send an E.A.S.E.

This continuing world
of gods & monsters

By Ray T. Petty
Publisher



This issue is dedicated to Scott Fresina, aka Scott Free, our Frankenstein Monster mascot during the Son of Famous Monsters 1995 World Convention, for service above and beyond the howl of duty!



BEAUTY BOBBIE BRESEE &
THE BEAST, SCOTT FREE

THE LADY IS A CHAMP

I really—I mean really—loved your interview with the one and only Elvira in issue #210. It helped me understand just what makes this lovely and gifted lady bok.

I know Elvira's second movie would be a real hit—if some studio would give her a break and help her get it made! To put it mildly, she deserves better than she's getting.

I wish you all my best in '98, Elvira! You go, ghoul!

ROGER HURST
Glendale CA

* True, at the moment the Mistress of the Dark is a lady in waiting, but

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND



we doubt if she'll be for long. She's one talent in Horrorwood who is considered very well rounded.

THE X-CLAMATION FILES

Not only are you the pun-master, but you are also the master of the exclamation mark! Excluding fang-mail letters and non-FM product ads, I counted 318 of 'em in issue #210!!! If that has been a fairly consistent number of 'em per issue, then since the beginning you now have 66,780 of 'em to your credit! Of course, even that figure is way below the number of puns you have spawned! Contact Gummess to see if there's a category for that!

Dig you (up) later!

REV. STEVIE FEVER
Olympia WA

* Only 318?! Are you sure? We could have sworn there were 319! Go back and check again! And while you're at it, check the other punctuation...but be careful, you're liable to wind up comma-tose!!!!

NO SCHOOL LIKE AN OLD SCHOOL

I remember when I was five years old, crawling atop the mountains of junk in my basement. I'd unearth my brother's old copies of Creepy, Horror Tales and other magazines published in the '70s, marking the retro horror revolution. I'd be paging through the damp, yellowing pages of these treasures (home for silverfish a many) with great fondness. It wouldn't be until your magazine's resurrection that I'd experience the resurfacing enthusiasm of reading these types of periodicals again. And Chicago's horror host, the Son of Svengoolie ('79-'86), provided my first glimpses into the world of the 1930s classics every Saturday night. I was hooked, or should I say pleasurable impaled, to this

PLAY IT AGAIN, BRAM!

Mel Brooks has proved himself to be one of the rarest of breed of filmmaker—he has created a highly entertaining follow-up to his original horror-comedy *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, that is, in itself, a stand-alone work of art, successfully combining comedy within a genuine macabre, Gothic framework. Brooks is rightfully proud of the work he and his highly spirited & talented cohorts have created. A few weeks before the film opened, while still in the hectic race to final cut, he graciously took time out and chatted with us about the making of *DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT!* and the stars who make it shine.—RF



mel brooks stakes his second claim in horrorwood

a novel idea

FM: You mentioned that Steve Haberman and Rudy DeLuca bought you a treatment and you read it for a couple of weeks. What was your reaction to the idea?

MB: Well, I read it and I called them that night and I said, "You know, I am reading it and I like it...I really like it—I think it really has a nice attack, and what I like about it more than anything is that it is a parody of the Bela

Lugosi film, one of my favorites."

FM: It does follow the Universal approach.

MB: Right, but it's not like *LOVE AT FIRST BITE*.

What I love is that it's not a switch picture. It's a faithful homage to the Ted Browning version of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

I'm very proud of it. I think it's well written, and it's obviously not going for any kind of cheap comedy—the comedy just bubbles out of it, out of the situation, naturally. It was a lot of fun to write, and hard work...we did many revisions before we arrived at what we thought was worthy of Bram Stoker's vision.





Mel Brooks as a fiesty Prof. Van Helsing.

Harvey Korman plays Dr. Seward, Administrator of the asylum for the mentally deficient—sorry, no vacancies.



the blood is the life...

FM: When you were writing it, were there key scenes for you that you just had to be in? I mean you mentioned how blood was going to be so important and you'd have that...

MB: Certainly. Renfield meeting Dracula was a very important moment, because of his transition, his metamorphosis from a subdued, rather dour little English accountant into a madman—and how Dracula does it. And we did it with a little paper cut, you know—it's very funny. Their relationship is really—I mean they are a great comedy team.

FM: That's true. You don't think of them as a team, especially in comedic terms, but if you let yourself go, they're as funny as any great screen pairing.

MB: Right! And Leslie Nielsen is remarkable—he's very faithful, very faithful to Bela Lugosi's style.

FM: Does he use that as a starting point? That's great!

an actor you can count on

MB: First of all, I didn't expect an accent, so when he came in with an accent I was stunned. He said, "Well look, what good is Dracula without a Transylvanian accent," you know, and he says, "If we are going to do a parody with the Bram Stoker Lugosi version, we've got to do a little Lugosi, you know, to show," and he did—he came in with it and it was just marvelous—and it wasn't a funny accent either—it was very real, very deep. He only used it on a few words, to be funny. For instance, he used it on the word 'chicken,' only on the word 'chicken' to really be funny and it's fabulous. So people ought to laugh. It's wonderful. I wrote "The Sid Caesar Show," and I would have been a comic myself, maybe 10 years earlier, but Sid was so good—he was such a great vehicle for my comic passion that I didn't have to do it, he did it! I wrote the stuff and he...he always lifted it, he always made the material better than I wrote it—he understood it and he nailed it, and that is what Nielsen did with this script—he actually lifted the material—he not only met it, but he had such a great idea, a great vision of what to do, you know, and he wanted to show the world that he's not just Frankenstein. We keep forgetting that he was a wonderful actor before he became a comedic actor...a really good one!

FM: Yes, it's funny, isn't it? Very few people probably know he can drama because he's been rediscovered through the Zucker films.

MB: Yes—he's done the Zucker films. Now I'm sure that kids between 10 and 15 don't know that he was ever an actor. They think of him as this old comic.

up and adams

FM: A lot of our readers remember him as Commander J.J. Adams from *FORBIDDEN PLANET*.

MB: Yes, he always talks about that and his experience with that. He loved it! He thought it was a great movie!

FM: Yes, it's a great film.

MB: He thought it was a seminal movie and a very important science fiction film. And he was wonderful to work with—I mean he has admired my work, especially *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, and so when I met him he said, "Are we going to be big



Van Helsing gives his students a stiff introduction to the art of the autopsy.

stuff again?" and I said "Absolutely—so zoom...., we'll trundle along, we'll make those tracking shots just the way Tod Browning did, we'll even shake the camera."

FM: That's what's so intriguing about your approach on this one. As with *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, not only are you parodying the content of the early *DRACULA* films but you've captured the look, the manner in which they were shot, the recreation of sets...did you wrestle with the idea of shooting black and white versus color?

the color of funny

MB: You know, I talked to the writers and we said, "Look, if we make it in black and white—number 1 we're giving up the blood—half of Dracula is blood.... The Blood is the life, the life is the blood, the blood is the life." And I said, "If we give up the blood then our biggest scene, the biggest scene that we've written—our biggest crazy comedy scene is the blood letting of Lucy when she becomes a vampire..." When you do a black and white you lose the blood, and also you're doing another *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*. I mean it's like a gimmick, and I did my one. I said, "Okay, we're saluting Bram Stoker, we're paying homage to Tod Browning, but we must not forget the glorious, glorious Hammer films, and Freddie Francis' photography..."

FM: He lit the film?

MB: Yeah...

FM: He's fantastic!

MB: He's one of the best directors of photography—I think he is the first and then directed the last. And I used him on one of my *Brooksfilms* pictures.

FM: On *THE ELEPHANT MAN*—

MB: Yes, *THE ELEPHANT MAN*. He's sensational. When I met him we talked a lot about *Dracula*...

FM: He must have had strong feelings...

MB: I said, "I want to do it one day..." and he said, "Don't do it in black and white—do it in color, do it like the Hammer Films did—in Victorian color—pastes, glorious reds, you know," and so color was the better option because, you know, we can't leave out the Hammer films...you know you're leaving out a whole realm of *Dracula*, when you do that.

FM: It's noticeable in the sets that they were homages to the Hammer sequences in *HORROR OF DRACULA*, and then it would go back to the Browning version.

MB: Yes, our ending is a Hammer ending. They didn't kill him with a stake through his heart, they killed him with lights.

FM: Peter Cushing running across the tabletop...

MB: Exactly.

the importance of die—alog

FM: You spoke about the humor that could come if Dracula was inept. Was that something that you felt really would carry the movie?

MB: It does, it does—it seems that all of the clichés we know about Dracula, his mesmerizing people, he claims them down with a phrase, which is absolutely the wrong phrase. "Do not be afraid," I mean it scares the hell out of them. Suddenly they see this apparition of lightening on the deck in the middle of a rain storm, he advances toward them, he smiles, his fangs show, and they scream and jump overboard and he keeps saying "Do not



Dr. Seward (Harvey Korman), Van Helsing (Mel Brooks) and Jonathan Harker (Steve Weber) prepare to flush out Dracula at the opera. (Any resemblance between this pose and a similar one of the 3 Stooges is purely coincidental!!)

be afraid." Finally he says, "I must devise a new message." He hypnotizes the usherette at this Victorian opera, and he says, "Please tell Dr. Seward he's wanted in the lobby." She's immediately hypnotized and transfixed. "Dr. Seward wanted in the lobby...Dr. Seward wanted in the lobby...Dr. Seward wanted in the lobby," and just as she is about to open the curtains to tell him, in his box, you know, the curtain behind the box, he throws this stupid phrase in, "And you'll remember nothing," you know just at the wrong time. So she opens the curtains and she stars blankly at the doctor and is quiet.

FM: That's great!

MB: Everything he does, with all of the clichés about Dracula, just seem to back it up. But none of the clichés that we use are cheap, and none of them are just going for the gags, they come straight out of the center of his character. Then there's this terrific battle of personalities between Van Helsing and Dracula, and I'm playing Van Helsing. He's the star of the movie and I'm the director, so we have natural forces clashing with each other, you know.

FM: You use an interesting language in the film—

MB: Yes. We made up a terrific ancient Maldivian language

FM: What does "Chervenia" mean?

MB: Yes, well, wedon'tknow...we found out what "shaboda" meant—shaboda means "get the hell out of there—leave," and he says that to the vampire, to the 2 girls that are in bed with Renfield. You know we borrowed things from different Draculas—we borrowed the shadow from Copola, but Copola

really borrowed it from Schreck—Nosferatu. So we're really borrowing it from Murnau actually...the shadow having a mind of its own.

FM: That's a great device. So you've seen all of these films?

MB: Well, I mean I'm not the buff and devotee of these films that Haberman is, I mean he's inhaled them—he knows every frame of every Dracula film ever made. He told me about "Le Vampire"—a serial made in the early '20s about the vampire—you know these 12 minute films. I mean, I've seen the Carl Dreyer VAMPIRE, but that's quite different. I have to look for those. Fortunately everything is on tape today.

dwight makes right

FM: Renfield's character works very well in your film.

MB: We lucked out with Peter MacNicol, we just really lucked out. We didn't know he was such a fierce fan of Dracula movies.

FM: We asked him about his role and he said "Well, you know, I didn't approach my role as parody—it was a love letter to Dwight Frye in a way."

MB: Yes, it was. As a matter of fact, we cut his hair—we got the right wig for him—he looks very much like Dwight Frye. But he does it in his own way. I mean they are both operatic, they both kind of strangely vocalize their roles. Peter understands it better than anybody who has ever lived. He understands how something should be placed. You know, it's just uncanny—he's



The klutzy Count (Leslie Nielsen) confronts his 2 women of the night (Karen Roe & Daria Hanin)—a pair of regular shriek walkers.

always right, and even if it's crazy he's right. Sometimes it seems so bizarre—he does little takes, little blinks, little Renfieldish things that are so wonderful. He's the bane of my existence because you don't want to lose the performance—it's an absolute gem.

FM: It's nice that he's in the movie a lot more than Renfield was in Lugosi's *DRACULA*.

MB: Yeah, and I think that the worst use of Renfield may have been in the Frank Langella version—I didn't see Renfield in that. They didn't even use Transylvania in that one—they just started on a ship at sea or something—it was crazy.

dream team

FM: Who did your computer effects?

MB: Dream Quest.

FM: Was that your first experience with those sort of effects?

MB: Well, no. I did crazy effects in *SPACE BALLS*—that was my first. But they were never so complicated, never generated so beautifully. I like glass painting—I really like mat paintings. But they matched the best mat paintings that I've ever had. They painted too, but they didn't paint on glass. They did paintings and then computerized the paintings, I mean they digitized them—it is just amazing. And we got about a dozen wonderful effects coming out of Dream Quest that are just thrilling. They really broaden the picture—they open it up magnificently—they take you to another world!

(Below) Peter MacNicol started with a tribute to Dwight Frye and molded his own, unique Renfield. Nielsen's Dracula proves he can be a formidable fiend as well as a comic Count.





Mina (Amy Yasbeck) cuts loose her inhibitions after en-count-ering Dracula.

(² In case you're wondering, "astucieux" means "tricky"—Dr. A.)

brave new words

MB: We even invented language.

FM: How so?

MB: Like, for instance in the open box when Dracula meets Mina and Lucy, after he leaves Lucy says, "He gives me a strange shiver. There's something otherworldly about that man," and I don't know if there is a word like 'otherworldly' but we invented it. It was just the right word, you know. And Lucy responds, "Yes, he gives me the shivers too," but her shivers are scandal. So she vamps him and turns into a vampire because of it.

mark anthony

She's gorgeous—Lysette Anthony. She's very talented. Did you ever see a Woody Allen picture called *HUSBANDS AND WIVES*? Sydney Pollack plays kind of the errant or the straying husband in that, and he takes up with a kind of hulbo stewardess for American Airlines.

FM: That was her?

MB: That was her—she played an American. I thought she was an American because she was so good. When she asked about the role, I said to her agent, "Well, she's got an English accent," and the agent said, "She's English—she was born in London and raised just outside of London in a girls' school—she's English." And I said, "But she played an American so brilliantly in Woody's movie with Sydney Pollack."

FM: Perfect, though.

MB: She was perfect. And she gave us a wonderful essence—English nuance, English phrases and stuff—great. Instead of "Wait for me, I'll catch up with you," she said, "I'll catch you up."—just, perfect. And she looked so gorgeous—her figure and her face. She was absolutely perfect to do the switch from this kind of astucieux* little English flirt to a full-fledged vampire. She was wonderful as a vampire, thrilling.

FM: Though the film is a comedy, were there any kind of real shock moments or censuses?

down by the ol' kill scream

MB: Just like I did in *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, I said, "Gee, if we don't make the monster dangerous we don't have a movie—he's got to be dangerous," so we had a guy torture him with matches and he grabbed him by the neck and cracked his neck and then broke out of his chains. So I said, "We need an equivalent moment," and we got one with Dracula actually killing somebody, which is very dangerous for a comedy, but without it you don't have Dracula—you can forget the movie, as far as I'm concerned. And then we have Lucy, which we are a little more free with because Lucy's not that comic a character. And she kills Clive Revill, who plays a grave keeper.

FM: Clive Revill did a wonderful haunted house picture, written by Richard Matheson, called *THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE*.

MB: Steve told me about that.

FM: Revill plays the leader of a parapsychological team that is trying to debug this haunted house. It is a really scary movie.

MB: He's a great actor. And he was in *ROBIN HOOD* for me.



Van Helsing and Seward insulate Lucy from Dracula (and anyone else with a good sense of smell with mounds of garlic.

Lynette Anthony plays it fast and Lucy.

steamed rice

FM: What was your reaction to Ann Rice having taken out some ads trying to suggest titles for you?

MB: I tried to call her, and I could never reach her. I think she was worried about my making fun of her picture. You see I think unconsciously, maybe unconsciously she wasn't happy with the movie. And then the studio said, "What, are you crazy?" you know, "We can't have this dissension, it's no good for business." She said, "You're right." She said, "I like the picture," but in her heart she said, "What did they do to my book!" you know. So then when I announced that I was doing this *Dracula*, I just announced it to keep all *Dracula* makers off the field, and so she must have thought, "Oh my God," and she was a little paranoid, probably she thought that I was making fun of her picture. So I called her secretary and I said, "Please tell her not to worry—I'm not making fun of her.... There's not one reference to her book or movie!"—there's not one reference, because it's not a classical reference, it's a strange, you know, offshoot of the Vampire legend, so it doesn't interest me, I mean I'm only interested in Carl Dreyer's picture and Murnau's picture and Coppola's picture—those are the things that interest me. That movie didn't interest me—I didn't like it, you know, I didn't think it was a good movie.

FM: It seems like she's just gotten addicted to taking out ads in the trades.

MB: You know I never thought about it but you're probably right—she's just got on a roll, you know, of taking out ads, so here's another opportunity for her.

FM: She missed *DEAD AND LOVING IT*—the one





Nielsen demonstrates some previously unknown powers of Dracula such as Mauroms Dancing.

Brooks tells Peter MacNicol "Look, Peter, I know you want to stay up and shoot this scene, but it's way past your bedtime. Remember, early to bed, early to flies!"



you're using.

better to give than deceive

MB: It is a good title—it's a very positive title! And I think he is happy to be dead and loving it. Even though Skatcer writes some beautiful prose about his longing for real death, and it's wonderful, I ignored that because I really didn't want to confuse the issue, then we would be rooting for him to die, and I never want to do that. Just like there are some mixed signal things sent out by *VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN* with Eddie Murphy—you think "Oh God, this is going to be notorious," then he plays a very serious leading man, with some comic relief mixed up in it, but he's not flat out funny in it, it's a serious picture. But that's a terrible thing to do to the audience—they expect something and then they're going to get this kind of curve ball, you know, and it's hard to hit a curve ball.

but seriously, folks...

FM: Although you're best known for comedy you've produced outstanding dramas like *THE FLY* and *ELEPHANT MAN*, are you thinking about doing something else in a serious vein?

MB: Before it's all over I might just do a flat out, you know, high drama of some kind myself.

FM: Whether as a director or even Brooks films doing another unexpected, more dramatically straight picture maybe in the genre of horror or science fiction, do you have any of those kinds of plans?

MB: Yes, I do, I actually do. Haberman and DeLuca have written a wonderful horror film, a wonderful horror film called *NOT HUMAN*. Unfortunately, the leading character is a little like *SPECIES*, like that lady, and they came up with her first. But anyway they are drawing away from that character into another, and it's a wonderful idea. You'll like *Van Helsing*, because I play him kind of straight except where it demands the bubble—you know it bubbles up and becomes funny, when the situation becomes overtheatrical. But you'll never see me asking for laughs—it's a different Mel Brooks—funny but not asking. There is no wine at the audience whatsoever—if they laugh they've caught me out, you know.

well done

FM: It's quite an achievement to make a comedy from these old horror icons that still respects the subject matter! Our readers will appreciate the approach you've taken. We like to think *Famous Monsters of Filmland* is more than just an entertainment magazine—it's become a sort of monument to a class of films that have never been completely embraced by the general public—you know, that these classics are either panned as silly and out-of-date or considered cult. But FM readers revere these films.

MB: It's been wonderful for me, you know. It's a very important magazine...it's very important. It has a tremendous following—it has an ardent following, and a passionate following. That's what's important to us.

FM: Also, the interesting thing about *Famous Monsters*, is that it has always carried humor with it. A lot of our young readers refer to it as "cool"—that you can think highly of



"You sleep in a dirt-filled coffin all day and see how pretty you look when you get up!"

these films and still have a lot of fun with them.

scare tactics

MB: It all works, it all works! It's a very good mix. For instance *poem*—poem and comedy do not mix—those signals see completely different. But horror and comedy—if done correctly—is superb, because you need the relief from the fear! You need the relief! I've gotten many letters from young people about *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* who said, "I'm not afraid of the monster anymore. Thank you," you know. "I have the monster now—he's my friend." You know they love Peter Boyle, that character. And I hope they do the same with Dracula—I hope they love Leslie, you know. I hope he entertains them enough, and yet he has to walk a fine line because he has to be strong, arrogant, and at times incredibly frightening. That's very difficult, you know. I'm very pleased with his performance, I can't tell you how pleased I am.

no pain, no vein...

FM: Not many actors can pull that off... Like George Hamilton as Dracula—there was just something too suave. The lines were funny but he seemed a bit detached from the role to really be taken seriously as Dracula. But your version has soul.

MB: I went for gothic majesty, you know, and arrogance. This Dracula wants to make love to his women and drink their blood, which is difficult for him, think about it—it's not easy!

FM: Ain't that the truth! But that's why we have filmmakers like Mel Brooks. If anything ever gets so serious that we can't laugh about it, we're all in big trouble.

MB: You said it. Anyway, this was fun. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

FM: Thank you. And if you ever decide to make a horror trilogy, don't forget there's still the *Wolf Man*!



A macabre mix of comedy and tragedy—Brooks' crafty combination celebrates all the great screen Draculas with a climax reminiscent of the infamous Cushing/Lee confrontations from Hammer's *HORROR OF DRACULA*.

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KARLOFF'S MONSTROUS



ORDER!

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

Elsewhere in this issue you'll read about the makeup techniques employed by the staff at Steve Johnson's Makeup F/X Studio to change actor Edward Herman into the Frankenstein Monster's nearest relative, Herman Munster. But 60 years ago, when Boris Karloff sat in the cosmetician's chair, his daily ordeal was quite a bit different. The following is a newspaper article from May of 1935 describing Karloff's typical day as he endured it while making *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. It's no wonder his performance looked so peined!—Dr. Acule

karloff suffers cruel & unusual punishment to be “frankenstein!”

Being a movie monster is not a cinch, or even an easy job. Ask Boris Karloff. He knows. As the monster of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* Karloff's every day was a busy day and here's his routine during production to prove the point:

4:30am—Awakened by the butler. Cold Shower. Infra-red ray treatment for torn and dislocated hip injured during the first week of filming.

5:10am—Black coffee.

5:20am—Off on a 15-mile jaunt to the studio.

6:00am—Begins application of makeup with cosmetician Jack Pierce.

7:00am through 11:00am—Still putting on makeup consisting of grayish-green grease paint, aluminum neck spikes, built-up cranium, false hair, blood wounds on scalp, burned hand, aluminum & steel braces for arms, burned and wrinkled facial & arm skin.

12:00noon—Still putting on face and arm makeup.

12:30pm—Begins putting on 21 pound shoes and padded legs & body to complete his super-structure—which increases his height to more than seven feet—in time to have luncheon.

1:30pm—Although lunch takes him a full hour, he eats only a sandwich & a cup of tea before he begins to feel the intense heat of the arc lights upon his skin with closed pores from the unusually heavy makeup.

2:00pm—Begins to work with 62 pounds of makeup on him. He lies down and rests between the scenes which call for fistic battles with others on the set and unusual physical exertion. Filming continues until 7:00pm.

7:00pm—Begins the task of taking off the makeup with oil and acetic acid with the aid of two makeup men.

8:00pm—Has a cold shower and a light dinner & tea before driving 15 miles back home.

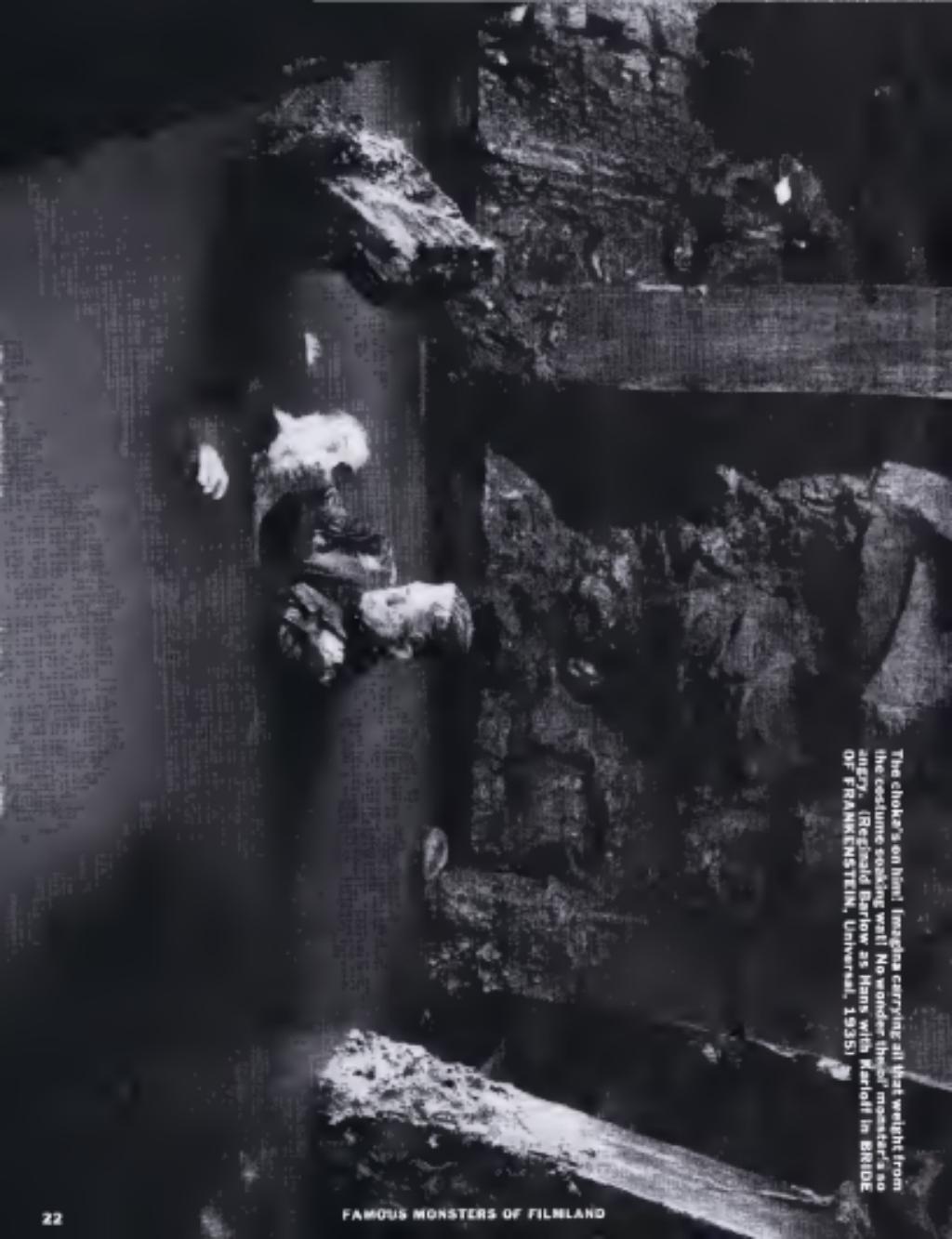
8:30pm—Infra-ray treatment and massage to aid circulation in his legs & arms affected by the heavy makeup and to relieve the pain in his injured side.

9:30pm—Time for bed, but he must study the script for the next day's work before going to sleep.

4:30am—Starts all over again.



Jack Pierce puts the finishing touches on Karloff for the first of the *FRANKENSTEIN* series. Pierce's painstaking techniques caused much distress for the actor but the final effect was chilling to audiences.



The chochka's on him! Imagine carrying all that weight from the costume-stealing wall! No wonder the mummy's so angry. (Ricardo Ballew as Mummy with Marie in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, Universal, 1935)

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MONSTER SPIDER...CRAWLING TERROR 100 FEET HIGH!



TARANTULA

A UNIVERSAL/INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

Year Released: 1955 • Run Time: 80 MINUTES

Cast:

JOHN AGAR, MARA CORDAY, LEO C. CARROLL,
NESTOR PAIVA, ROSS ELLIOTT, RAYMOND BAILEY

Directed by JACK ARNOLD

Screenplay: ROBERT M. FRESCO & MARTIN ERKELEY

Story by JACK ARNOLD & ROBERT M. FRESCO

Produced by WILLIAM ALLAND

Director of Photography: GEORGE ROBINSON

Special Photographic F/X: CLIFFORD STINE
AND DAVIS S. HORSELY

Makeup: BUD WESTMORE

Music Supervisor: JOSEPH GERSHENSON

"This film really bugged me." —John Agar



Prof. Land (Eddie Parker, who also doubled as Dr. Jacobs, the first casualty), the second result of Deemer's human experiments, stops by the lab to say good night.

lonely are the grave

The desert—sunbaked...silent except for the sound of the wind whistling through the rocks and the sparse trees. Nothing but sand, scrub and rocks—a hot, arid and deadly landscape.

A lone figure makes its way through this forbidding setting. Coming closer we see that it's clad in pajamas. A brief moment of laughter from the audience gives way to a gasp or startled reaction as it gets its first look at his distorted, almost simian features. His hands are swollen, the fingers large and abnormally thick. The figure stops as if trying to get its bearings as it gasps for air. Then he collapses, his right hand digging convulsively in the sand for a moment, then relaxing as death comes in claim him...

So begins TARANTULA (1955), Universal/International's first entry in the giant monster sweepstakes of the '50s. Along with THEM! it was also one of the two best "Big Bug" films of that era.

bug juice

The discovery of the bizarre corpse starts the film's chain of events that are linked to a scientist's dream of benefiting mankind. A dream that turns into a nightmare. The dreamer is Professor Deemer, who has moved lock, stock and test tubes into a large mansion outside the picturesque town of Desert Rock, Arizona. There, he and two colleagues have been working on a project that

they hope will prevent, or at least ease, the world-wide hunger they see awaiting mankind as the world's population continues to explode. The project: an artificial nutrient. Held together (the binding agent) and triggered by a radioactive isotope (Amontac) the nutrient does work. Up to a point. The one problem that Deemer and his team haven't been able to lick is the nutrient's side effect of causing gigantism in the project's test animals—like rabbits or white rats grown full size, even if they're only a few days old, or guinea pigs the size of police dogs...and a tarantula that looks to be about the size of a Great Dane. You get the idea. All healthy and thriving on the nutrient, despite their unusual growth.

puff 'n stuff

The man found in the desert was one of Deemer's colleagues and friends, Dr. Eric Jacobs. Deemer himself makes the identification at the town funeral parlor/morgue. Cause of death: acromegaly (proper term acromegaly), a disease that causes the pituitary gland to go out of control, causing eventual enlargement of the features, hands, feet, joints, tongue, etc.

While the local sheriff accepts Deemer's statement as to the cause of his colleague's death, local doctor Mac (our hero) Hastings is more than a bit suspicious. For one thing, the sheriff saw Jacobs about a week ago and he looked normal and well. For another thing, acromegaly does not develop this much in just a



"Steve" Clayton (Mara Corday) and Dr. Matt Hastings (John Agar) visit Prof. Deemer (Leo G. Carroll).



(Above) Unlucky Leo feels the result of getting jabbed with his own nutrient formula.

(Below) A young Clint Eastwood (before he started singing "Rome, Rome on the Range") prepares to fire a missile, daring the giant spider to "make his day."



few days!

2 deemer-its

The nutrient is the cause of Jacobs' demise, as it is the cause of the derangement and death of the third member of the scientific team, Lund. The two men had become impatient and experimented with the nutrient, believing it was good enough to test on humans...despite its goliath effect on animals. They injected themselves before Deemer knew what they were up to. Before he dies, however, Lund attacks Deemer at the house, causing a fire in the laboratory, smashing cages in the fight, and then renders Deemer unconscious, injecting him with the nutrient before he dies.

In the resulting carnage before Deemer regains consciousness and battles the fire, most of the lab animals are destroyed—except for the tarantula, which bugs out the back door and into the desert.

a lass, poor deemer

It isn't long before a new assistant arrives in town to work with Deemer. Her name is Stephanie Clayton ("Steve" for short...it's a '50s thing). She's gorgeous and beauty, which, naturally, attracts the eye of handsome Dr. Hastings. She also provides him the chance to visit Deemer's place and inspect his lab.

Meanwhile, the tarantula is making its presence felt. It's been crawling through the desert (usually visible just after the hero's car has driven through the scene), growing larger & larger. But even a giant spider has to eat, and it isn't long before the King Kong arachnid is munching on horses, cattle and an occasional human being for a special tasty treat (such as a ranch owner whose livestock have been the creature's first midnight snack, or the drivers of a truck that it seizes in its mandibles and heaves off the road). All it leaves behind are the bones of its victims, the flesh gone ("Peeked like a banana" says one of the film's characters) and pools of white liquid.

a changed man

Back at the Deemer place, "Steve" has been eagerly aiding the scientist in his project, amazed at the over-sized baby rats and bunnies, but soon becomes aware that the Professor is changing. The nutrient Lund injected is starting to have its effect, and it isn't long before "Steve" and Matt learn the truth behind Jacobs' death from the deformed and dying Deemer.

Meanwhile, the monstrous tarantula is crawling through the night desert towards the Deemer mansion...

a furry good film

TARANTULA is probably the 2nd best of the "Big Bug" films to come out during the '50s. Based loosely on an episode of the SF anthology TV series "SCIENCE-FICTION THEATRE," "NO FOOD FOR THOUGHT" by Robert M. Fresco, TARANTULA's main story line was written by Jack Arnold and Fresco himself, who also received co-scripting credit with Martin Berkley.

Directed by Jack Arnold (who had already given fans such classics as *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE* and *CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON*), TARANTULA is a prime example of a well-done '50s 'B' SF chiller. It delivers the goods



A Tarantula Bar-B-Que—Sci-Fi Style!

in packing, with Arnold keeping things moving, and manages a few good scares along the way. The special effects with the tarantulas (a live one which is creepy enough) are well handled, with a minor glitch or two along the way. There are some laughs, both planned (such as the banter between the film's hero and an eavesdropping hotel switchboard operator/desk clerk) and unplanned (such as the audience's initial reaction to the pools of tarantula venom left at the scenes of livestock or human slaying; this immediately turns to a "eccccccccwwwwww" of disgust when the hero touches a bit of it to his tongue). But for the main part, the chills keep coming right through to the film's climax, where the Air Force (led by an oxygen-masked Clint Eastwood, then under contract to U-1) blends a hand.

cast a blast

Agar's identification with the film remains solid to this day with fans. He's likeable and suspicious enough of what's going on at the Deemer place, while Coaday is attractive and has a bit more in the brains department than the typical '50s SF movie heroine. Yes, she does scream, but who wouldn't with a giant tarantula playing Peeping Tom outside your bedroom window before demolishing the house and devouring its "creator", all before your very eyes.

The strongest member of the cast is veteran actor Leo G. Carroll as the dedicated and tragic Prof. Deemer. Carroll's long career in films had led him into television with the hit farcical TV series *TOPPER* in which he played Thorne Smith's upright banker haunted by two fan-loving ghosts. So great was Carroll's familiarity to film and TV audiences through the series that when he made his first appearance in this film, (minus his trademark dapper mustache), I recall a buzz going through the audience that quickly became audible as "That's Tupper! It's Cosmo Tupper!" If audiences weren't certain they knew who he was by sight, they were when Carroll opened his mouth to deliver his first bit of dialogue in that distinctive voice.

His Professor Deemer is not the typical '50s mad scientist, but one driven by the most noble of reasons. He's forced to be semi-sinister and secretive due to the nature of his work and the results of the unstable aspects of his invention. His gradual changes while under the influence of the active *antivenin* cause him to become a tragic figure.

While *TARANTULA* isn't the classic that *THEM!* is, it's still an exciting 80 minutes of chills as well as a fine example of U-1 SF-thiller output of that era. Available on video tape and laser disk, the film is accompanied by its original theatrical trailer. —ELH

(FM Exclusive!!! Get your very own real, honest-to-badness Tarantula Collectible personally autographed by John Agar! See page 78 this issue.—Dr. Acalu)

HOORAY FROM HORRORWOOD!

time marches backward!

Sunday, December 10, 1995 was a day FM fans will remember for a long time to come. That day at The Vista Theater, one of Los Angeles' most historic movie palaces, fans stepped back in time to the days when afternoon matinees meant hours of frightful fun for fantasy film lovers. The first of the all new *Famous Monsters of Filmland* Monster Movie Matinee Series had officially begun!

That day, up on the giant silver screen, 2 classics by Master Animagician Ray Harryhausen mesmerized an audience of kids from 6 to 80! The marquee outside the theater proudly proclaimed "RAY HARRYHAUSEN TRIBUTE." The lobby window beamed with posters announcing the day's treat: JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS! EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS?

a fan-tastic day

Fans began arriving at 11:30am to meet the man who had introduced many of them to the wonders of fantasy films many years earlier, and to gaze at some of the marvelous miniatures used in the making of these now-classic films. Some remembered seeing his magic in theaters in home towns all across the country. For many who had only seen them on home video, here at last was an opportunity to see them as they were meant to be seen.

No sooner had Ray arrived at the theater than long-time friend Ray Bradbury strolled down the aisle! Although Mr. Bradbury was not feeling his best that day, it would not keep him from lending his wholehearted support. (The bond of friendship between these 2 legends is a thing to behold—a deep love and mutual admiration that has stood the test of over half a century.)

Shortly thereafter our own Forrest J Ackerman arrived and completed the gathering of the bat-pack of Horrorwood.

setting their sights

On display, framed by the newly designed laser disk and VHS editions of The Ray Harryhausen Collection from Columbia TriStar Home Video, were several miniatures from EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS: 2 of the actual saucers used in long shots, the Washington Monument, Capitol Dome and Treasury Building models that were wrecked by the crashing saucers. Also on display was the leader of the Sinister Seven—the skeleton warrior who appeared in both JASON and its predecessor, THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD—and a half dozen of Ray's original storyboard sketches for JASON. (For me the greatest thrill came while watching dad after dad stand before the display, each with his young son or daughter, explaining about the models, sharing a special part of their youth with their children. Like the letters we receive to Fang Mail, it renewes my commitment to this magazine each time I see something such as this.)



(Left) A young fan gazes in amazement at the display of models Ray used in making **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS** and **EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS**. (Right) Ray "cements" his name for posterity in a ceremony held in the Vista Theater forecourt.



from the landis beyond beyond

For 2 hours Ray was kept busy signing photos and a commemorative mug issued for the occasion. (A few remaining mugs & photos are available from our Captain Company Mail Order Department. See page 76) Then at 1:30pm the lights in the theater dimmed, and I had the pleasure of introducing Perry, who brought up FM veteran John Landis to preface the screening of **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**.

John, who is a huge fan of Ray's work and a fellow **KING KONG** fanatic, fielded questions from the audience for Ray about the making of the film and pointed out particular scenes to watch for. John's enthusiasm, as usual, was infectious!

When the film finally began you could feel the audience glowing. The adults were smiling. The kids were mesmerized. (In fact, John Landis had to leave about a third of the way through the film to attend the preview of his new production, **STUPIDS**, but neither he nor his son Matt wanted to leave!)

a host of perception

After **JASON**, director Joe Dante stepped up to the microphone to introduce **EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS**. Joe, who has a deep fascination with early sci-fi pictures, brought the film into perspective for the audience. He remarked about the lighting, camera work, the "persons" of the saucers—here were many young fans weaned on technical F/X spectaculars, now experiencing a prime example of

the 1950s postwar paranoia that spawned many of our best sci-fi films. Like Bob Doran of American Movie Classics, Joe's prequel primed them to view the film from a different perspective. And as he did with his film **MATINEE**, he painted a picture for the audience that honored another era.

Everyone had so much fun that afternoon that the showmen on into the evening screening of **CASINO**. The 350 attendees filed out of the theater and regrouped in the forecourt of the Vista for the day's happen—Ray Harryhausen placed his handprints into a block of fresh, red cement accompanied by his signature and date in The Fantasy Film Court of Fame at the Vista. Following Ray, Forrest J Ackerman added his handprints and signature to a collection that began with Martin Landau & Jessica Parker (at the first screening of **ED WOOD**) which will continue to grow as The Vista Theater and Famous Monsters of Filmland celebrate our special fantasy film heritage.

Keep watching these pages for announcements of our next FM Mannequin—RF

My deepest thanks to Lance Alspaugh of the Vista Theater; Tene Mozingo of Columbia TriStar Home Video; John Landis; Joe Dante; Stephen Jones; Ernest Cunningham, President of the Ray Harryhausen Fantasy Society; Ron Burst of Hollywood Book and Posters; Richard Foss of Ledger Travel; Eric Hoffman and Forrest J Ackerman for their enthusiastic support and help in making our tribute to Ray Harryhausen a tremendous success. And a special thanks and welcome aboard to Jackie Mitchell for a great job as FM's new public relations representative!



FAMOUS BREEDERS OF FINLAND

part one of an exclusive 3 part interview for FM!

THE MAN BEHIND THE MIRACLES

A black and white photograph of Ray Harryhausen, an elderly man with a receding hairline, wearing a suit and tie. He is seated at a desk, looking down at a long, thin object that appears to be a model of a creature or a long strip of paper. To his left is a lamp with a large, decorative shade. The background is dark and out of focus.

**the marvelous, mythical, magical worlds
of ray harryhausen!**



A young Ray Harryhausen in the Army Motion Picture Unit during WWII.



Some of Ray's models from the Mother Goose Fairy Tales Series.

Ray's mentor—Willis (KING KONG) O'Brien



Like so many others who grew up in the 1950s, I was introduced to the magic of fantasy films by Ray Harryhausen. My family had taken me to see THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD in New York City. That film, combined with a bag of salt wafer taffy I devoured in the theater, gave me my first qualified nightmare, the details of which are vivid in my memory to this day.

33 years later I would find myself sitting in the living room of Ray's lovely London home, holding in my hands some of the miniature monsters that had terrified me in my youth. Talk about coming full cycle!

The first thing one notices when meeting Ray is a genuine warmth and humility. He speaks of his work almost as if he is not aware of the true impact of his contributions to the cinema. He has very large, strong hands, which seem incongruous with the delicacy of his models and the surgical precision of his techniques. But they are the hands of a master craftsman.

This special 3 part feature interview was taped at LAX on December 12, 1995 while we sat with Ray awaiting his return flight to London after FM's tribute to him at the Vista Theater, supplemented with unreleased material taped during production of Bancomm's AMAZING WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY home video. For everyone who has ever grinned a smile of delight while watching the fruit of this man's imagination, we invite you to join us at the table with Ray Harryhausen.—RIF

ya gotta have art

RF: Your film work is legendary, so before we get to specific productions, let's go back and talk about your early days. Your storyboards are as amazing as your film work. Did you study art?

RH: Just moderately. I wish I had studied art more thoroughly because I found that I had to put my ideas on paper so other people could see them, so I learned drawing. I guess Paul-Gustave Doré was my inspiration to study art, and then I remember when I was very young I was walking down, I think it was Los Angeles Street or Main Street, whenever the Velasco Theatre is, and lo and behold in a little store I saw three O'Brien Crabbie drawings: big ones from *Creation*. Byron Crabbie was one of O'Brien's artists on *KING KONG*. And these were drawings from *Creation*, which was pre-*KING KONG*, and they were in the window there. So I went in, and I almost passed out. And I went in the store...

RP: This is before you saw *KONG*?

RH: No, this was way after *KONG*, this was many years after. And I remember going into the store and asking an artist there who did oil painting, his name was Henry Goody, and he had these in the window, and I said, "Where on earth did you get those?" and he said, "I got them at an auction, at Beacon's," he'd picked them up for little or nothing, because Byron Crabbie had died and all his stuff went to Beacon's, and from Beacon's it went on to auction to pay the bill. And these were drawings from *Creation*, which nobody knew of except me, or somebody like Ferry or Bradbury.

a little sculpt-duggery

RH: And so I made a deal with him. I was just starting to sculpt things, and I said, "I'll make you a sculpture if you'll give me the drawings," because I didn't have much money then. So



A young Ray Harryhausen trims the coat (formerly his mother's!) of the Wooly Belly Mammoth he made.

Years later Sokurah's fire-breathing dragon lit the imaginations of many a young fantasy film fan. (THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD, Columbia, 1958)





How they did it: 1. Kerwin Mathews and Karen Grant rehearse a fight scene with Olympic fencing master Ezio Musumeci-Greco. Each move is precisely choreographed as in a ballet. 2. When the routine movements are perfected, Mathews is filmed as he performs each separate sequence alone on the live set. 3. Harryhausen animates the miniature skeleton on a small table-top stage in his studio, positioning each move of the skeleton to coordinate with the previously filmed sequence with Mathews. 4. The completed sequence shows Mathews in mortal combat with the living skeleton. (Details on some of Ray's innovative production techniques in Part 2 of this article in FM #212.)



he gave me these three drawings, which I still have in London, from Creation, and I made a copy of Remington, I made three of them for him! You know it was fun doing it because nobody else asked me to make sculptures. So I modeled these three copies of Remington action poses of cowboys on horses. I still have one in my collection, called "The Foothills." And I made these three in exchange for these drawings. He said, "I'll also throw in, I'll paint your portrait," so I still have that. So he painted my portrait as well, as a trade for these three wonderful...

RP: He painted your portrait?

RH: Yes, he painted my portrait.

RP: So you got three paintings plus a portrait of yourself in exchange for the sculptures?

RH: I got these three drawings, which he probably paid \$10 or something for, which are now worth a fantastic amount because they are original Cratee's and O'Brien's.

RP: And this is still way before you met Obie?

RH: Oh, no, I had met Obie in the meantime.

RP: This is like pre-MIGHTY JOE YOUNG?

RH: Maybe it was before, so I was still at high school... so it was a little after I met Obie.

RP: But pre-MIGHTY JOE?

RH: Ya, pre-MIGHTY JOE, way pre-MIGHTY JOE - prewar. And so I got these three drawings, which I still have, and I treasure them, in exchange for doing these three sculptures. One day I wandered in there, several months later, and I noticed he had one of my sculptures and he had signed his name on it! I didn't think it was worth anything, and so I never even put my name on it, and he signed his name on this sculpture! And I thought, "Oh, my God," you know, "are these worth that much?" He probably sold them. They were plaster, he had them cast in plaster and then bronze plated.

RP: Again, your sculptures are incredible! Did you study? I mean is this just a natural talent you found yourself...

RH: Well, I studied sculpture a bit, spasmodically not formally.

RP: You probably couldn't learn what you do.

RH: No, you can't. You want to do it. I like to do things in three dimensions much more than in two dimensions. I prefer to sculpt than to draw. But it woke me up a bit that maybe my sculptures had some value. And so from that day on, I still have his oil painting that he made, and one day I suppose I'll publish it. I was very young and had hair!

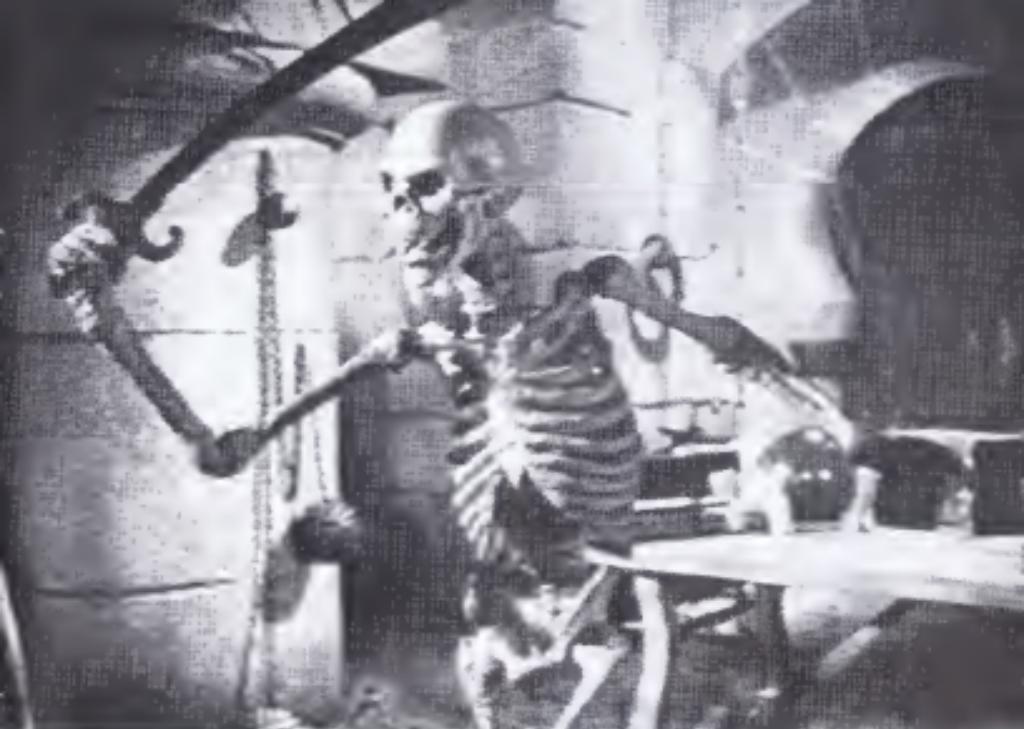
RP: We should go back and look at it again, maybe it's like *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*!

RH: I think so, maybe my portrait has changed over the years. I should put it up in the attic and maybe it will...

where there's a will there's a ray

RP: The type of film you ultimately perfected was something of a novelty in the old days. I know you eventually had the great fortune to work with O'Brien and company, but how did you get started? You've often told of how you were knocked out by seeing KING KONG and how you eventually acquired stills to study from Forrest J Ackerman but before that... how did you get started?

RH: I saw KONG at the age of 13, but when I got to high school articles came out in *Popular Mechanics* and various magazines, and I finally discovered the glories of stop motion.



No bones about it—hidden under a latex covering is a fully articulated metal armature complete with minuscule ball joints which enabled Ray to recreate, with fine precision, the moves of Olympic fencing master Enzo Musumeci-Greco in the persona of Sokurah's black magic mercenary. (THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD, Columbia, 1958)

And then I started making my own armatures in my garage and shooting them, even outside. I would shoot a lot of them outside, and you would see the sun move during stop motion and all of the shadows would change during the picture.

I couldn't find a kindred soul who would make the models for me, so I had to learn to make them. I couldn't find a kindred soul to do the photography and I couldn't afford to pay anybody. So I learned photography. I went to night school and learned it. I went to learn art direction. I went to U.S.C. at night while I was still in high school and took courses in art direction. And Lou Phisiot was a photographer in Hollywood in the early silent days, and he was teaching night school at U.S.C., photography and mat painting and how to do trick work, so I took those courses. I took a course in film editing, and it was a blessing because I learned many things because I had to learn them. There was nobody else, I couldn't afford to hire anybody. So all of these things... unfortunately, the person who sits down with a computer today will not have to learn all of these things. So it was almost an education to do these things yourself.

RF: But it's also hands-on.

RH: Yes, and it was a hands-on proposition where... and even almost nepotism, because my mother dressed the little figures for my puppets and my father helped me with making the furniture and the props for the fairy tales.

birth of a notion

RF: You're talking about the Mother Goose stories?

RH: Yes, the Mother Goose stories.

RF: Was that just something that you decided to make with the idea that, "Maybe if I make these I can market them," or did you just make them for their own sake?

RH: Well, before the war I was fiddling up with a lot of experiments, like *EVOLUTION*... I wanted to do the history of the world in stop motion. Of course, my favorite part would be the dinosaurs so I started with them. I didn't have a complete script, but I kept making experiments with models and mat paintings and glass shots, and I felt after I got out of the Army I'd better make something that was possibly commercial, that I could get some money back on. So I thought, "I've got to make something with a beginning, a middle and an end, a little story," and the Mother Goose stories seemed sound because they were



MYSTERIOUS ISLAND (Columbia, 1961)



Ray's favorite—Talos in JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS (Columbia, 1963)

Bradbury's beast awakens from a long hibernation in THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS (Warner, 1953)



in public domain. So I had some out-dated Kodachrome, 1,000 feet of a year out-dated Kodachrome, which I used, and it was perfectly all right, but the Army threw it out. I finally bought a Cine-Special camera, which had a one-frame exposure capability, and I started the Mother Goose series. And I thought they would be for television originally, but then they were only three minutes long. And so then I made Humpty Dumpty and then I made Little Miss Muffet...

RF: I remember Hansel and Gretel.

RH: Well, that was later. And I made these series of three or four minute all Mother Hubbard and the Queen of Hearts. And there didn't seem to be a market for three or four minute episodes, because that's what I thought maybe television would use, and so I tied them all together and then made a prologue of Mother Goose, and an epilogue of Mother Goose, going back in the book, and that's how that came about. That came to 400 feet, which was a saleable item. And I found a distributor, Bailey Films, who was my first distributor. And after about a year and a half they paid off much better than some of my feature films.

RF: And you were still in Los Angeles?

RH: Yes, in Los Angeles, in my garage. I made these in my garage all on my own. I financed them. The only thing that cost me money was recording the sound.

RF: You designed the whole production including what the tracks would be?

RH: Ya, then I went back through the whole thing. And so that's all the money I spent, because my time, I didn't even chalk that up. My father, when he came home from work, would help me make props and things.

RF: What sort of work did your father do?

RH: He was a machinist, so he made a lot of my armatures. He was a very clever man and very dexterous with his hands.

RF: Were you trying to build things and your Dad would come in and say, "Give me that, I'll make it..." I remember my father doing that when I was just getting started in photography and trying to build my own darkroom. It pained him to watch me doing things the hard way!

RH: Ya, particularly work that scared the lathe, ya.

RF: So we can establish a time frame for the readers, where do the Mother Goose stories fit in versus, let's say, THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS?

RH: Mother Goose came about right after the war, late '45. I got out of the Army in late '45 and they sent us all to New York. I was with the Special Service Division, and all of the married men got out first, so they sent the unmarried men back to New York and we had to wait for about six months—I lived in New York in Greenwich Village for about six months waiting to get out of the Army. And with my mustering out pay I took a trip back to California via Cuba and Yucatan. I always wanted to go to Yucatan. So I spent my mustering out pay on air fare to Cuba. I was there three days, and then I flew to Yucatan and went out to the pyramids and then to Mexico City and then back to California. I'd always wanted to do that. I was glad I did it. So then George Pal wanted me to come back to Puppetoons, but I felt I'd be caught in...

RF: You were working with Pal before the Army?

RH: Ya, I was working for Pal before the war, that was around 1938, '39, '40 and '41. And I worked for him for two years and made 12 Puppetoons with him.

RF: Like Tabby the Tuba?



Lunch time on the set of **THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD** (Columbia, 1958)

RH: Some of the early ones, ya, the first 12 that he made. But I was afraid I'd get trapped in just grinding out footage for somebody else.

RF: For those animations somebody else was sculpting the figures, right?

RH: Oh, ya, I was just doing the animation, and photography. I would set up the camera - they had a photographer there, but I would make the setup and then animate the puppets, and they were very simple to animate because they were all separate bodies - you had 24 figures, separate figures to make one step. So there wasn't much creativity in it, so I felt I'd rather go back and try something on my own. So I stayed at home and my father built me a hobby house behind the garage and I shot all of these puppet films in that hobby house. I went back the other day and took photographs of it. And now it is a gymnasium for women weight lifters!

RF: Is there a plaque or something there, "From these Bleakie Beginnings..."

RH: No, I don't think they would care.

the luck of the draw-ings

RF: You said you did a lot of the actual hands-on work for **MIGHTY JOE YOUNG**— were you doing that under Orie's direction or was he busy with something else and you pretty well had a free hand?

RH: Well, I had the great pleasure of working with him in the

preparatory period. When he first started the thing, started making conception drawings, which would be written into the script, a lot of it started from his drawings. And I would mount them and I would caption them, and finally from his drawings, a great many of his drawings, the script was developed, because he would draw something that he could do and then Ruth Rose and Schoenbeck would write it into the script. And so then it became their property. But a lot of the ideas came from Orie.

RF: When it actually came down to the physical production of the film...

RH: Yes, well then I worked for him for about a year so I know how he thought, because I had seen **KING KONG** 50 times! So I knew sort of the pattern of his thinking. So we didn't have to communicate much at all. Working with him in the pre-production, I knew instinctively what would please him, and he seemed to be pleased after he saw what I did.

RF: You had been friends with Ray Bradbury at that time?

RH: Oh, I knew Bradbury way back in '38, ya. But, you know, we lost contact during the war. It wasn't until **THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS**... that sort of brought us back.

*Coming in FM #212: Part 2 of our 3 part special. Ray talks about the making of **THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS**, **IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA**, **EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS** and **THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD**! Packed with many rare production fotos. Don't Miss it!*

THE MAD GHOUl

(is there any other kind?)

THE MAD GHOUl
UNIVERSAL - 1943 - 65 MINUTES

CAST:

GEORGE ZUCCO, DAVID BRUCE, EVELYN ANKERS,
TURHAN BEY, ROBERT ARMSTRONG,
ROSE HOBART, MILDRED STONE, CHARLES
McGRAW, ANDREW TOMBES

DIRECTED BY JAMES HOGAN

SCREENPLAY: BRENDA WEISBERG & PAUL
GANGELIN,

ORIGINAL STORY: HANS KRALY

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: MILTON KRASNER
MAKEUP: JACK P. PIERCE

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: HANS J. SALTER

"NOT EVEN THE DEAD ARE SAFE! YOU'LL SHUDDER
AT THIS DESPOILER OF THE DEAD, THIS MONSTER OF
EVIL."—Trailer for THE MAD GHOUl.

During the second horror cycle which ran from 1939 to 1946 or so, three actors were considered to be the personified mad scientists: Bela Lugosi, Lionel Atwill and George Zucco. Boris Karloff would do his man in the labs, but there was always a bit of restraint to him or a colder menace (except for, say, the climax of *THE DEVIL COMMANDS*).

The deranged experiments these actors performed was sometimes referred to as the "Neon-eyed school of mad scientists"—villains who glowed with diabolic glee at whatever horrible deed they were about to perform. All in the name of science, of course. At least some of the time.

Each had their own special moment. George Zucco's was in *THE MAD GHOUl* (1943), a chiller that some have declared takes a basically unpleasant idea and handles it quite well within the limitations of the production. If the film were remade today, it would be turned into a blood-bath in (un)living color. But in black and white, under the direction of James Hogan, *THE MAD GHOUl* is a near little chiller in the best Universal B-picture tradition.

classical gas

Zucco is Dr. Alfred Morris, chemistry teacher at the medieval university of...uh...University City. As the film opens, he is lecturing on a series of slides of Mayan paintings that deal with the ancient sacrificial rituals of that race. It also seems that the Mayan High Priests had discovered their own version of 'poison gas' (we were at war at this time, remember). But this gas was more horrible than whatever would be used by the Axis enemies.

Here, the victims would be exposed to the deadly fumes that would bring about a state of living death. Morris also tells the class that the ritual of removing hearts from living victims was not to offer a sacrifice to the gods. It's real purpose was to bring life back to the victims of the gas. He also notes that the Mayans performing the heart removal used a crude but obvious surgical technique known as a cardiectomy. (Which probably wasn't covered by their ancient Medicare program.)

the chemistry was right

Morris promises to reveal the findings of his research when classes resume next semester. However, Morris is further along than he has let on, as he reveals to Ted Allison, who is planning to be a surgeon. It seems he has managed to actually recreate the deadly gas and wants Ted, who does need some additional time in the chemistry lab, to work with him as his assistant. Ted, who admires Morris, eagerly accepts, deeply intrigued. He soon sees Morris' private home laboratory, where the scientist shows him the harmless looking crystals that, when heated, will give off an odorless, colorless gas that will bring about the horrible condition of living death. The pair get to work right away, bringing life to a lab monkey, Juke, who had been exposed to the gas. Morris tells Ted that the first symptom is a kind of emaciation, followed by a loss of will and eventual death. Morris is determined to reverse the effects of the gas, the focus of his summer research, by removing the heart from a living monkey and combining a fluid from a certain portion with ancient herbs. The pair are successful, with Ted performing the necessary surgery.

all's fair in love and gore

All seems to be going great. The research is going well and Ted is engaged to the lovely Isabel Lewis, a concert singer on the rise. The young man is head over heels in love with her. But as in any Universal chiller, there's a serpent in the Garden of Eden. It seems that Dr. Morris is in love with Isabel as well. The pair visit Morris after Isabel's concert (she's leaving on a tour of several cities). While Ted is in the kitchen mixing drinks for all, Morris notes that Isabel is not her usual self. He guesses the truth—she's in love with someone else. And Morris, since he's known the pair for a long time, gets the idea that Isabel is in love with him (no reason is given for this, just that Morris feels that she needs an older, more mature man). He tells Isabel not to worry, that he'll see what he can do. So, in the greatest of mad scientist traditions, he starts planning to deal with Ted.

Morris sets a trap in the lab which ends with the young man being exposed to the deadly gas, becoming a living dead man.

responding only to Morris' will.

ya gotta have heart

And so begins the first of a series of grave despoilings by the zombiefied Ted, under Morris' guidance. The heart of a newly-buried corpse becomes the main ingredient in the serum created by Morris to bring Ted back to normal—a somewhat fragile normality, as Morris would soon find out. His health is shaky and the boy is haunted by nightmares—his subconscious memories of what he has done. As the story progresses a side effect of the gas is revealed—whenever Ted gets overly upset, he has a relapse into his living dead state... (easy there, Ted.)

Then things take an unexpected turn for Morris, who is sure that he's got Ted under control, even though the young man is determined to go to the office where Isabel is performing. The monkey that they revived has a relapse and dies. Uh Oh. Morris is faced with the prospect of further grave violations to get the hearts to keep Ted alive. A live cemetery caretaker who turned up as Morris and zombie-Ted were trying to break into a crypt, is their next victim.

scheme work

To add insult to injury, Morris learns that he was completely wrong in believing that when Isabel confessed her unhappiness with Ted she was inferring her love for him. Turns out that she's in love with her accompanist, Eric Iverson. Instead of accepting his error, Morris, in thwarted lover tradition, decides to get rid of his other rival by driving Ted into his zombie-state and then commanding him to arrange to meet Eric outside the stage door of the theater where Isabel is performing that night and shoot him. Isabel's unexpected arrival (she's worried about Eric's safety) ruins that plan.

Meanwhile, the police are baffled, until a go-getting crime-reporter, Ken McClane, figures out that the grave-robbing ghoul





Ted is despondent after picking the wrong hand that Morris had his shoe hidden in. "Try guessing again, old boy," said Morris. "Trance's are you'll get it this time."



Ken McClure (Robert Armstrong) is just seconds away from becoming a boxed lunch for the MAD GHOUL.

A woman with a ghoul—Evelyn Ankers as the unlucky-in-love heroine.



is making his appearances in the same cities where Isobel is giving her concert! An ingenious trap is set by McClure at a local undertaker's establishment. But he is over confident—he will take the villain by surprise and...well, let's just say the mock funeral he set up to catch the ghoul in the act doesn't go to waste.

But Ted is beginning to suspect that something unholy has been going on. His nightmares are turning him into a wreck. And when Isobel finally tells him of her true love, things begin the time honored rush to a grim conclusion.

tight cast

IF MAD GHOUL were remade today, it would be turned into a bloody saga. The off-screen card stabbings would be in full view and the heart robbing scenes would be... As is true of many of the old Black & White classics, THE MAD GHOUL is effective and chilling, without resorting to sensational tactics.

George Zucco and David Bruce hold the film together as Dr. Morris and the hapless Ted. Zucco's usual over-the-top performance, as seen in such low-budget films as THE MAD MONSTER and THE FLYING SERPENT (although he was more calm and a bit benign in Paramount's THE MONSTER AND THE GIRL (1940)) is subdued—his Dr. Morris is a mixture of the usual "science is everything" experimenter with, as Tom Weaver pointed out, "an affecting vulnerability" when he learns the truth about the heroine's true love interest. David Bruce was one of many contract players at Universal, usually cast in their comedies or secondary roles in some of their more important films. He was also the "other man" suspected of murdering Lon Chaney Jr.'s wife in CALLING DOCTOR DEATH (1943), the first of the studio's INNER SANCTUM series. His Ted is a naive young man, blinded to the fact that his girl loves someone else. His turns as "The Ghoul" are chilling, supported by Jack Pierce's makeup (which has been said to resemble Karloff's Im-Ho-Tep look from THE MUMMY).

As the center of the romantic quadrangle, Evelyn Ankers is her usual Universal heroine self, anguish over how not to hurt Bruce's character, mistakenly turning to Zucco for help and, of course, worrying about her real love. Even in what could have been a stereotypical role, Ankers brings just something extra to her part. Turhan Bey plays the third man in the romantic subplot, but really doesn't have that much to do except look handsome, be there when Ankers needs him and be a nice guy on screen. It would've been nice for him to have had a hand in figuring out what was going on.

A real treat is Robert Armstrong as "hold the front page!" reporter McClure—fast talking, wise-cracking to the detectives trying to unravel the grisly mystery and finally having his brief moment of glory as he gets the drop, albeit temporarily, on Zucco. Ross Hobart plays his confidant, music reporter Delta, whom McClure lets in on his theory of the Ghoul's path of devastation. Andrew Tombes gives another delightful comedy character performance as the undertaker who helps Armstrong in his ill-fated plan, while Universal regular Milburn Stone is the police detective trying to track down "The Ghoul," with Charles McGraw as his partner.

James Began keeps things moving nicely for the film's 65 minutes, while Hans Salter provides an effective "horror" score, consisting mainly of reprises or new variations of selections from past Universal texts.

THE MAD GHOUL was one of the popular entries in the original SHOCK THEATRE TV package and is available on video tape and laser disk from MCA. It's creepy fun. —EH

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MAKING THE MUNSTERS

TV MOVIE

Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of features we'll be publishing in the coming months on the Art of SFX work and makeup & production techniques. All photographs seen in this article are from the private album shot by members of the makeup crew for "The Return of the Munsters" TV film. We think you'll enjoy peeking behind-the-scenes as those who worked on the film saw it. Special thanks to Bill Corso for providing the pictures.

crafty people

For anyone who works in TV or film today there are two great dreams that can, if you're lucky, be fulfilled—to work with a favorite performer you've always admired and to work on a favorite show you've always admired. Now, if a favorite performer is no longer with us or if that

FAMOUS MONSTERS

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND



Although he didn't have to endure the hardships of his distinguished predecessors, Edward Herrmann still had a chance to experience first hand why they call it "monster makeup." Above and bottom left he is shown getting into character. Bottom right and center—no less an ordeal to remove the appliances.





Judy Gold as Elsa Munster Hyde greets her stand-in. The replica life cast was used for the sequence in which Grandpa pops open her head to examine her brain. Tight budget restraints prohibited the production company from actually performing such surgery on the actress.

show you always wanted to work on is long gone these wants might seem to be little more than pipe dreams. But fortunately Hollywood specializes in realizing pipe dreams and for the talented gang at Steve Johnson's Makeup FX, they had the unique opportunity to bring back the greatest monster show ever to see its way into syndication—"The Munsters." Granted, Fred Gwynne was gone and the surviving original cast couldn't just step back into their roles of 30 years ago.

icon do it

So how do you create a new episode of a TV icon and do justice to genius? That was the problem faced by the production crew working on *THE RETURN OF THE MUNSTERS* for FOX-TV last Halloween. (A curious title considering the story is actually a prequel to the time of the original TV series.) The answer they came up with, fortunately, was it ain't broke so let's not fix it. The style of the now legendary show, the costumes and in particular the performances of the original cast all blended to produce

one of those rare combinations where everything works. Nothing could be added. Nothing could be removed. "The Munsters" series was a work of art.

So it was decided to try to recreate as closely as possible the look and feel of the original show. The makeup was going to be a key ingredient in that recreation. Some readers may remember, albeit cringingly, the "new" Munsters series of some years ago. All agreed that wasn't the way to go. So, with monster maven John Landis as Executive Producer, the crew set about the monumental task of recreating the First Family of TV Monsters.

how to make a munster

The makeup responsibilities fell to the gang at Steve Johnson's X/FX Studio in Sun Valley, CA. The most challenging aspect of the job, of course, was transforming Edward Herrmann into Herman Munster. Not just a facsimile of Herman Munster—but Fred Gwynne's Herman Munster. And, as if that weren't enough, this show would be shot in color. We asked Bill Corso, of SJ X/FX to tell



Family reunion—Pat Priest, Al Lewis, Yvonne DeCarlo and Butch Patrick pose with Edward Herrmann the day they shot the restaurant scene with these beloved members of the original cast. (Below) Makeup artist Bill Corso airbrushes some color onto Veronique Hamel.



us about the production and what it was like recreating those characters.

"We went back and looked at all the elements that made the original series work so well," said Joe. "The headpiece that Fred Gwynne wore in the very first episodes of *"The Munsters"* was the same one made for Glenn Strange for *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*. If you look closely, you'll see that it didn't quite fit him. That's why his head seemed to taper at the crown. Ultimately, they created a new mantle exclusively for Fred, but we didn't want that sloping-head look. As it turned out, Strange's Frankenstein headgear did fit better on Edward, so we cast a new one from that original and that's the one he's wearing in the film."

ah, the ghoulden days!

"It's not until you actually work on a recreation of a show like *"The Munsters"* that you appreciate the hardships that the actors went through in the old days. The

makeup Fred had to wear was basically the same that Karloff, Lugosi, Strange and Chaney wore—thick build-ups of grease paint on the skin, tightly fitting appliances...They had to keep a hose with cool air available to slip up Fred's back between takes to cool him down inside that sweatbox he was encased in. He wore a harness that pulled him down to give him a labored walk—that's why you often see him hunched forward...it was the only position he could get any relief in. And the makeup ran! It dripped into his eyes and required constant touchups. It took so long to get him ready for the day's shoot that you'll notice that the scars on his hands are just drawn on with a pencil—there wasn't enough time to do the detailing after his face was done. It's no wonder he didn't have fond memories of his days on the show! Yet, through all that he created a character that is loved by everyone."

color my world

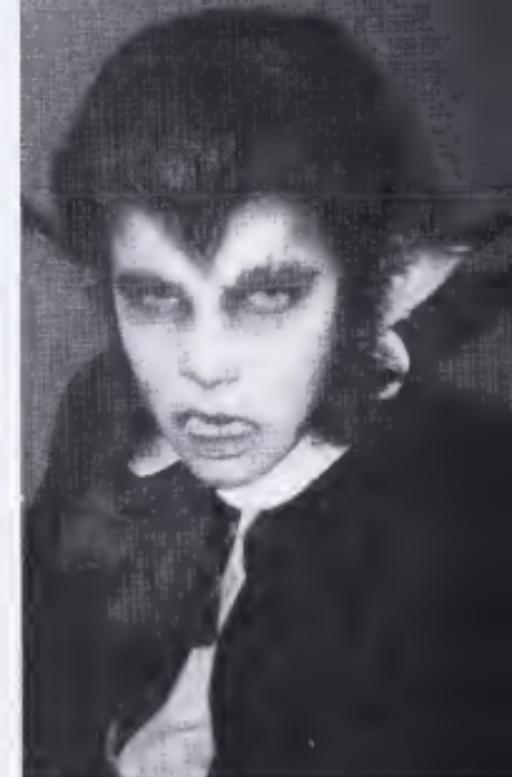
"I can't think of any actor that would sit through that kind of torture today and, with the materials and techniques that have been developed, there's no reason for them to. For Ed we knew we had to create a color version of the Frankenstein makeup, but at the same time we had to play that down enough to hold a feel of the black and white image everyone knew. The solution was to use tattoo inks. This technique was used extensively on *WATERWORLD*. The colors are brilliant, yet water resistant. We applied them over the appliances with an airbrush. That allowed a lot of detailing, without the actor having to be drowned under thick paint. After a number of tests we decided to add that protruding jaw that gave Ed the same facial structure as Fred. We also added the highlights on his eyelids—that cartoonish look that made Herman Munster look horrible, yet benign. Ed was great. He had his own style to bring to the role, yet he appreciated the shoes he was filling were big in more ways than one, so he added elements of Fred's sort of half smirk smile, deep laugh and broad, sweeping body moves. I think he created about as perfect a tribute to Fred's character as anyone could possibly hope for, while still personalizing the role."

as time goes by

"We had to finish all the actors each morning within two hours. We had originally asked for 3 but they hit the ceiling! They said we were tying up the whole day! Now a rule of thumb when you do this kind of makeup is that an actor is only going to sit for so long. So we had a different artist and assistants on each character and the timer was set for 2 hours. Wherever we were when the time ran out, that's how they went to the set. Even while the makeup was drying we didn't have time to relax. It took 5 minutes just to do Ed's nails. So rather than just sit waiting for the next step in the process he did them himself."

deja view

"The great thing about working on this shoot was the attitudes



Little Lord Fauntleroy—Mathew Botuchis got the full werewolf transformation makeup for *The Munsters* prequel. Seems as Eddie got more Americanized, he learned to control such embarrassing outbursts.

of the whole cast and crew. Everybody wanted to do this picture! It was a labor of love. I remember the biggest thrill for me was walking on the set the first day. There's this huge old castle right out of James Whale and the whole place looked like a frozen moment from the 1930s and then, there's the Frankenstein Monster standing right in the middle of it all! It was an incredible rush. In fact, we'd all done a lot of research into how they made the early Frankenstein films and after looking at the behind-the-scenes makeup stills each of us in the makeup department showed up on the set that first day wearing lab coats and ties! A testimonial to Jack Pierce!"

"Of course, as if having the spirit of Fred Gwynne with us on the show wasn't enough we had the great fortune to have Al Lewis, Yvonne De Carlo, Pat Priest and Banch Patrick for a special scene in the restaurant! All in all, I think everybody was pleased with the final results we achieved. There's no way anyone could surpass the legacies of these incredible performers or the magic of the original show, so what we hope we accomplished was to bring back the spirit of that show and celebrate the 30th Anniversary of a true Hollywood original." (Bravo!—FM)



The First Family of Fright—Fred Gwynne, Al Lewis, Yvonne DeCarlo, Butch Patrick and Beverly Owen—
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ORSON WELLES: THE ORIGINAL "BOY WONDER" OF HOLLYWOOD!

Orson Welles has been given many labels over the years—he's been called a genius, the greatest director in motion pictures and the man who has advanced the performing arts more than any other individual in show business.

From his earliest days at the WPA Theater in New York to his many radio programs, through his triumphs in motion pictures in the '30s and '40s and his television appearances in the '60s and '70s, this "boy wonder" was a legend in his own time.

Readers who have a real interest in the structure and artistic interpretation of film should pay close attention to this man's writing and direction of such productions as *THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS*, his memorable portrayal of the elusive Harry Lime in *THE THIRD MAN* and, of course, his production which is revered as the most honored American film ever made, *CITIZEN KANE*.

But with all his accolades in theater and film, Welles' first love was radio. During an interview in 1975 he said "Radio is the thing I love most of any medium I have ever been in...it was a golden time. It was great fun. It was live entertainment and that wonderful excitement that anything could go wrong, and often did."

Welles had a significant career in radio. In March, 1937, at the tender age of 22, he began playing Lamont Cranston in the popular series "The Shadow," a role he would continue into the fall of 1938.

After a season on the New York Stage, his Mercury Theater company moved to the CBS radio network on July 11, 1938. Just sixteen weeks later, on October 30, he would achieve instant notoriety via his all-too-realistic adaption of H.G. Wells' "War of the Worlds." The most famous 60 minutes in the history of broadcasting!

Among his other radio accomplishments were the Orson Welles Theater program on CBS from 1941 through 1943. In 1944-45 he was the producer, director and occasional star of "This Is My Best."

A little remembered but warmly received show ran on ABC radio in the early days of 1945 on which Orson would just sit before a microphone and tell tales—so distinctive was his voice and delivery that's all it took for him to keep an



Welles lines up a shot during the filming of his magnum opus *CITIZEN KANE*.

audience spellbound!

His wartime performances included regular appearances on the Armed Forces "Command Performance" shows, "Mail call" and "G.I. Journal." (It might be hard for younger readers to appreciate, but the entertainment industry played a major part in moral support for everyone during World War II. No generation since (thankfully) has had to endure such devastation, which created an overwhelming need to find a moment's peace or any reason to smile.)

From June 7 to September 13, 1946 Welles hosted and starred in the Palist Mercury Theater. While living in England in the early '50s he starred in the radio version of "The Third Man" and "The Black Museum" for the BBC. He also skillfully re-created the role of Sherlock Holmes' arch enemy, Professor Moriarity on a radio return of that series in 1955.

He was also a frequent guest star on the popular mystery program "Suspense", appearing 9 times in a 3 year period!

Welles once recalled a interesting anecdote about "The Shadow." It was the only pre-recorded program he did in those days. Programs were transcribed on large 16 inch acetate platters. One evening while the program was being played on the air, Mr. Welles was in the company of a lovely young lady, and at a key moment (you can imagine what that was) a voice came on the radio saying, "The Shadow knows, crime does not pay." Mr. Welles' comment... "I was thwarted by an acetate." It was undoubtedly the only time he was turned off in the middle of a performance!

LUGOSI IN THE DEVIL BAT

Susanne
WITH
KAREN

SHARD FANGED
BLOOD SUCKING
DEATH
DIVES FROM
Midnight
Skies!



MIKY BELA STEPS UP TO BAT!

THE DEVIL BAT - PRC - 1940 - 70 minutes

CAST: BELA LUGOSI, SUZANNE KAAREN, DAVE O'BRIEN, DONALD KERR, GUY USHER, YOLANDE MALLOTT, EDWARD MORTIMER, ARTHUR Q. BRYAN

DIRECTED BY JEAN YARBROUGH

SCREENPLAY: JOHN THOMAS NEVILLE

ORIGINAL STORY: GEORGE BRICKER

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: ARTHUR MARTINELLI

a famous monsterreview
by eric hoffman

Many readers probably have a special soft spot for THE DEVIL BAT. It was among the first movies run in the early days of television, when the networks or local stations were buying up whatever they could in terms of movies (as this was the end of the '40s or the start of the '50s it would be *low* *years* *down* the road that *big* *big* *medium* pictures would find their way onto the small screen). The general bill of fare for TV's evening at the movies was the small-budget films by such companies as Monogram or PRC.

My watching DEVIL BAT (on a Sunday afternoon, no less...but no horror film hosts yet) was a momentary lapse in judgement by my parents. After my first exposure to Lugosi's all-stops-out mad scientist, I was hooked!

all that glitters is not cold (cream)

DEVIL BAT takes us to the little town of Heathville, where its most famous industry seems to be the huge cosmetics company founded by Martin Heath and Henry Morton. One of the town's most beloved figures (according to the film's prologue,) is Paul Carrathers, the doctor. Kindly old Carrathers—always concerned with his fellow citizens. But in his hilltop home, the good Doctor is something else. He's a practicing mad scientist. Actually, he's not just mad, he's furious! Seems that years ago he formulated a greaseless cold cream and took a financial beating when some friends parlayed it into the foundation for a mega-successful line of cosmetics. (*I once heard that when these friends were told that Dr. Carrathers would drive them out of the market with a new milk based cold cream, one of the pair exclaimed "How dairy!"*—Dr. A) But Carrathers, instead of accepting the enterprising pair's offer to go into business with them,



While the budget was small, Bela delivered big. His performance is suitably cold, calculated and, but for a '30s penchant for having criminals get their "just" rewards, he had a terrific little scheme. He could have gotten away with murder!





Bela tends to his furry fiends in the hidden vault in his laboratory.

was anxious to buy equipment for his secret experiments. In other words, he immediately took what was available instead of waiting for what would eventually become the more lucrative possibility. Over the years, still struggling along while the Heath and Morton families became rich thanks to his discovery, Carruthers' mind had turned things around so much that he believed that he was taken advantage of.

chinese brushoff: lo-tion

Naturally, he's going to do what any disgruntled mad scientist would do, get revenge! In his hidden laboratory, boasting a gadget-filled set-up worthy of Dr. Frankenstein (unusual for low-budget PRC) he has come up with his instrument of vengeance: a giant bat-creature that was once a normal-sized itty-bitty flying rodent. Now it is a potential flying killer that reacts violently to the smell of a particular herb that Carruthers made an integral ingredient in his new 'shaving lotion'. The idea is simple; the bat smells the scent on a victim and zeroes in.

a real close shave

The first victim is Roy, son of Martin Heath, who has come to Carruthers' place to deliver a special surprise to the good Doctor—a bonus check for \$5000 that was to be given to the doctor at a party that Carruthers elected not to attend. The check is a gesture of appreciation from the firm for his periodic discoveries. But Carruthers sees it as

a bone thrown to a "faithful dog." He also sees the situation as a chance to make a trial run of his flying killing machine. Giving Roy a bottle of the new "lotion", Carruthers gets the young man to apply some on the throat. As Roy does it Carruthers watches gleefully. When Roy leaves with a cheery "Goodnight, Doctor," Carruthers amends it to a slightly regretful (and ominous) "Goodbye, Roy". As Roy makes his way home the giant 'devil bat' (which reviewer Tom Weaver has described as having "eagle-sized proportions") flaps its way through the night and power dives at Roy.

layton place

Needless to say, it isn't long before the press is onto a story, and Chicago reporter Johnny Layton and his photographer "One Shot" are sent by their editor to cover it. Since he's the hero for this film, it isn't long before Johnny (a) begins a romance with the heroine, Mary Heath, and (b) figures out that the creature of death is very selective in its choice of victims....

monogram cracker

DEVIL BAT would be the first of many low-budget chillers for Lugosi, followed by his nine picture deal with Monogram Pictures in addition to his Universal appearances. In his book *Poverty Row Horrors*, Tom Weaver says that DEVIL BAT "easily sizes up as one of Bela Lugosi's best low-budget films...," which is something of a surprise considering the company which made it (while

Monogram was considered to be the low-budget studio, PRC was the next step down).

cast well typed

The film is fun, even though it has flaws, such as scenes involving some of the supporting characters which slow it down. The supporting cast is a mixed bag. Actor/stuntman Dave O'Brien is well suited for his role as the fast-talking and thinking Johnny, who just happens to figure out what's going on before the law. Suzanne Kaaren is an attractive heroine, while Donald (remembered by fantasy film fans for his part in FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS—1938) is the film's comedy relief sidekick. Guy Usher and Edward Mortimer are the heads of the Marion and Heath family, while Hal Price is the local chief of police. Arthur Q. Bryan is the soop-happy editor of the newspaper that sends the hero to cover the story (Bryan was also reported for many years to be the uncanny voice of "Elmer Fudd" in the classic Warner Bros. cartoons). Yolande Malivit plays Maxine, the Heath's maid, as well as a foil for Donald Kerr's character. She would eventually change her last name to Donelan and marry British director Val Guest.

superbly sinister

Lugosi is the driving force of the film, his Dr.

Carruthers obviously relishing his sinister pleasures. It's great fun to recall some of Lugosi's lines and delivery, especially when he's persuading a potential victim to try "some of the new lotion", following their pleased reaction to its effect with such lines as "I guarantee you'll never use another." His final "Goodbye" alone should have spoken volumes to his targets. Apparently they were either too dense or too trusting of "beloved" "Joe" Carruthers to suspect any mischief.

"good buy, roy"

Tom Weaver pegged it right when he stated that "In a film like THE DEVIL BAT, Bella's just what the (mad) doctor ordered." DEVIL BAT has been available in one form or another for some time, either on video tape (including an inferior quality edition under the reissue title KILLER BATS). Most recently, it has been unleashed on laser disk along with Lugosi's only color film SCARED TO DEATH (1947).

THE DEVIL BAT isn't a classic by any stretch of the imagination, but it's fun, has some prime Lugosian moments and an interesting "monster" that, if you have a thing about bats (and a lot of people do), might make you look up at the sky a lot. Or think twice about using that new after shave you got for Christmas... —EH

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MAN OF A THOUSAND PLACES!!

**from "young" gas jockey to "mant"
scientist, william schallert is the
prototypical man-about-town!**

Chatting with Bill Schallert is one of the most pleasant experiences one could ask for. Gentle, soft-spoken and always ready with a smile, it's hard to imagine that anyone could really be that nice. But the man who's immediately recognized as *Patty Lane's* father or *Dobie Gillis'* teacher is just as he seems. Fans who attended FM's 1993 or 1995 World Cons can attest to his outstanding abilities as a comic. Not a comedian—a comic. His natural wit, charm and eager-to-please demeanor blur together, and the result is one genuinely very funny person. He seems to find life amusing and that attitude is infectious.

In putting together a resume, it seems easier to list the films and TV shows he hasn't been in. He's logged appearances in some 500 films, 1500 TV shows and hundreds of stage plays. He's served as the president of the Screen Actor's Guild.

In fantasy film roles he's been attacked by robots, fought Commando Cody, been eaten by giant insects, diagnosed an incredible shrinking man and had the distinction of being the object of Captain Kirk's scorn.

We chatted with Bill at his home overlooking the

Pacific Palisades—a magnificent '30s structure styled right out of an 18th Century English castle, with a grand vaulted ceiling, balcony, a huge wall-filling fireplace and a quiet, bubbling fountain in the rear court. A proud, warm & quietly majestic home—a perfect reflection of its master. —RF

a filler of strength

RF: Reading over your resume, there's listed hundreds of parts you played in the span of your career. If you showed this to someone not familiar with the actor's craft they might say "My goodness, Mr. Schallert, you can't seem to hold a job!" There doesn't seem to be a type you haven't played.

WS: I started in '47, and the first picture I did was a 20th Century Fox picture called *FOXES OF HARROW*, where I also had one line, "Gentlemen, Gentleman, the Bank of the United States in Philadelphia has just closed its doors," at which point chaos erupted





Bill as one of the "mutates" in CAPTIVE WOMEN, aka 3,000A.D., aka 1,000 YEARS FROM NOW.

on the floor of the New Orleans Stock Exchange.

comedy of errors

WS: It was the Mississippi bubble bursting and I was reporting it. Well, I got three days work out of that one line, mainly because they had a hard time getting a guy to commit suicide properly. He was not an actor, he was an extra, and he was standing at the bar and they had this crazy system where instead of dubbing in the sound of the shot later they were going to do the sound of the shotgun when he was shooting, but he wasn't going to pull the trigger on a gun that made noise, instead he reached into his coat and pulled the trigger on a gun that let out a puff of smoke. And literally they tried to coordinate, and since he wasn't an actor he could never do it exactly the same way each time, and the director ran it about 30 takes, and I think it sloped over to another day before they finally got it. I can remember that at one point they tried three or four times in a row where he would reach inside and squeeze the trigger on his gun and the guy doing the shot was behind the bar, where he couldn't see him. I don't know whether somebody was signalling or what, but you'd hear the bang and then after the bang, a second later he would go:

"Umm." Then he would do it too early, he'd go "Bang." They finally got one where they were coordinated, and no smoke came out. And as he slid to the floor smoke slowly came out of the sleeve of his coat. He'd gotten the gun ion for into his armpit, it was totally bizarre! And that told me a lot about how movies were made. And when I saw the picture, with all of this effort you heard an off-screen shot and they cut to another scene and here was the guy's body on the floor, so it was all wasted effort. And I thought, "If this is the way they make pictures" (I guess it was my first picture) "well, this is what I'm going to do then."

RF: That should give encouragement to our readers who like to make their own videos. I'm sure they have all tried to improvise a way to do an effects segue only to think "Cosh, the way I'm doing this is ridiculous." So it's heartening to know that even in the big league this type of thing goes on.

WS: Oh, ya. I mean this was 20th Century Fox at the heyday of Hollywood days. '47 was the last year when Hollywood was at its peak, and later that year the British imposed an import tax, they were trying to preserve their currency, and most of Europe stopped letting pictures take their money out, whatever money they made had to stay in the money of the country, that is if it was France it would be francs, etc. That is one of the reasons Samuel Bronston made all of those westerns in Spain. Because they released pictures there and the pictures had made money but they couldn't take the money out. So the way you did it—it was almost like money laundering—they wait in there and they shoot a film with the money that was available in Spain and then they took the film out, and then they could show the film all over the world and that way they could get their money back. Well, '47 was the last year in which Hollywood had kind of free reign and they knew that they were fighting a tough economic battle with foreign release and all that. It was in this picture right at the tail end of that.

RF: Your resume lists a good number of sci-fi productions. Was that a favorite type of part for you?

a penny saved

WS: No, I was just kind of an accessible actor—people were casting me, and they were making a lot of science fiction films then. They got me started, I think, Wistberg and Pollicino got me started with THE MAN FROM PLANET X, and that was a really good part. I guess the picture has its merits. It was shot by Edgar Ulmer, who was a very good director, and he always gave a certain quality to his pictures, even though he worked on a very tight budget. We shot it in 6 days and I think they made it for around \$50,000. Very few people made them that cheap. I remember the stage was very small... if you watch the picture you'll see that the car pulls into the scene, but it backs out! There just wasn't any room for it.

RF: It's easy for someone who's not doing it for a living to fail to realize that whatever they are, movies are a business first.

WS: I was once offered a part in a BOWERY BOYS picture... I don't know, I was offered \$350 for a week or something like that, and I said to the agent: "God, my price is higher than that, can't you get at least \$400?" He said, "No," he said "the BOWERY BOYS pictures are made for a certain amount of money." I don't remember whether it was like \$38,000 or \$43,000, and he said, "They won't spend another penny because they know exactly how much they're going to get back." They're made to order. And it doesn't do them any good to put somebody better in it than they would. They will put in whoever will work for the price, because it doesn't matter whether



Dr. Mears (William Schallert) is entranced by the alien as Robert Lawrence (Robert Clarke) stops him from wandering. Margaret Field looks on from inside the alien vessel. (THE MAN FROM PLANET X, Sherill Corwin/United Artists, 1951)

they're terribly good or not so terribly good, the picture will still make the same amount of money, because they know where it's going to go." So it was funny... in a way, I don't know what it's like... it's like piece work. It's like having a line of goods and you know you're going to sell this many of them and you're going to get back this much money for them, so you don't have to spend more money making them. So I knew that \$50,000 was pretty cheap, and we worked at a couple of hundred bucks a week or something like that. Whatever it was, it was very close to the minimum.

Well, anyway, Wabeng and Pollexfen made the film the MAN FROM PLANET X for \$50,000 and then they sold it to a distributor, an owner of theaters named Sherill Corwin, and I think he paid them \$150,000 for it, and with that money they were able to finance their next picture. They got Albert Zugsmith involved, and they did a picture called CAPTIVE WOMEN, AKA 3,000 A.D., AKA 1,000 YEARS FROM NOW, which was not a very good picture. The fellow who directed it had only been an editor before, he had never directed anything, and he really didn't understand what to do with actors. It had some pretty good people in it. I remember a guy named Ron Randall played the lead in it, and I played the head villain. But it was an interesting concept, it was about people who had survived an atomic war, and it was New York City and there were what these alienites used to call 'mutates.' They were afraid people wouldn't understand the word 'mutant.' Well, maybe they had a point, I don't

know. But most people are intelligent enough to get it, but they called them 'mutates.' So I was one of the mutants, and we all had scars on our faces, and there were the norms, people who had not been damaged by the atomic war. And it anticipated a little bit PLANET OF THE APES or something like that. Anyway, what we were always trying to do was to kidnap the women of the norms so that we would now have children who were not mutated like we were. And the picture was mostly silliness along those lines, but it had an interesting concept. And then they went on and did a bunch of other pictures with Zugsmith, and Zugsmith then went on to Universal. He tried to use me as much as he could. I must say he was very good. This was a long way about answering a question... I mostly just worked in things that people asked me to work in, and I guess, I don't know why, I worked in a lot of science fiction films because they were making a lot of them. I did westerns too, but I was less likely to be cast in a western than in a science fiction film.

RF: Do you know yourself what your appeal is?

WS: It used to be at that time, I don't mean to flatter myself, but it used to be at that time that I could do a wide range of parts. Zugsmith tried to cast me in everything that he did, and he would cast me in the wildest parts imaginable. He was always trying to stick me into something that I wasn't really right for but that I would somehow find a way to do because he was convinced I could play anything. And that's flattering to an actor. I'd like to think of myself



Bill contemplates a point during a press conference in *TOBOR THE GREAT*.

along the lines of somebody like Guinness, who was doing that sort of thing in British films but on a much higher level. And I continued to do that, even after I had done "The Patty Duke Show," which kind of set me in a different mold. From then on I was the warm, fatherly guy, and I did a lot of roles like that, on series especially. But even after that, I remember doing "WILD, WILD WEST." I played wild characters on that —crazy, far-out characters. In fact, I replaced Ross Martin when he had his heart attack and another actor, Charles Haidman, who is now dead. He and I replaced him for about five episodes. Chuck did a couple and I did three. But I had already played a wide range of characters, and so they knew I could do it and that's why they cast me. So part of my work in science fiction films may have had to do with that fact. I'd done a lot of stage work in town and I had a fairly good reputation. I had worked in one theater for four years, and Charlie Chaplin used to come there and one of his sons was involved in running the theater with me and another fellow, and he actually directed a production of *RAIN* there with June Havoc, and I played Reverend Davidson in that as a very young man. So a lot of casting people in town knew me from that and they would recommend me to people on the basis of that.

the write stuff

RF: Tim always fascinated by the differences between Hollywood in its studio days and Hollywood as it exists today. You have people today that are really top notch, first rate, working at a level that could never be done before, and yet even the best of what comes out today often falls very far below the mark of what was produced years ago. Now, this is a subjective opinion, but it seems that things have progressed technically to the detriment of content. What do

you see as the biggest difference between the old days and today?

WS: It's probably in the writing. Usually everything begins with a script, and so there are some very good writers who are still writing today, but the nature of film financing today makes it very difficult to put together a package, feature films especially. I think the early years of any business—you know some of the richest television scripts that were ever written were written in the first five years of live television, it was just a happenstance. We had people like Rod Serling and Patty Chuey, Abby Mann and people like that, who all came out of live television at the same time, and for a while there were few restraints on what they could do and they were inventing the form as they went along. Then it got formalized and a little rigid and suddenly you begin to lose some of that spontaneous quality. At the low end of the business, where there is not a lot of money, I think some of that same spirit of adventure and creative freedom happens. I mean, you can almost do anything you want, and science fiction in particular has the ability to free people up to do things that way too. That's why Rod Serling, at the end of his life, devoted himself to writing only for the "Twilight Zone," because he found he could say things there that he wouldn't be allowed to say, because it was always speaking he could deal with issues of censorship and that kind of thing that he couldn't deal with otherwise. There was a specific case where he had written a television screenplay about Emmett Till, a black kid who had been condemned to death unjustly in Mississippi, and it was the story of how they'd uncovered the truth of that, and the networks would not allow him to do it. They had to change it from a black kid in Mississippi to a white kid in New England, and then the whole point of the story was gone. So Serling said that he got so discouraged by the experience of trying to deal with censorship in television that he started to write science fiction, and suddenly he was free to do anything, he could deal with that same subject but now it would be aliens, and he could make the same social comments that he wanted to make, but he could make them in the framework of science fiction.

RF: That's so true. I think the hallmark of early sci-fi shows was the emphasis on the story. They used effects—effects that today look hokey—but the point was the story, not visual reality. It never fails to amaze me that a lot of top grossing films—look at *PORRENT O'LEARY*—are just good stories that don't rely on effects to work... yet the studios still seem to think if they don't make technical blockbusters no one will go see them.

WS: I think you're right that the technology tends to run away with them. In the old days they really didn't have access to very much technology so a lot of it was just an exercise of imagination. There were a lot of Europeans who came over here, either during the rise of Hitler or just after the war, and so there was a large European contingent here in Hollywood then, and they had a big influence on the making of films. Or maybe they were just more interested in ideas. But I know that science fiction provides an outlet for people to deal with things that they couldn't deal with otherwise. The westerns also had that capability. For a while there, the last years that "Gunsmoke" was on the air, John Mantley, who used to produce that, "I've got the best job in Hollywood because I'm doing an hour anthology." The regulars on the show didn't want to work, so he had a free hand to leave them out of episodes; they were quite happy not to work. They got paid one way or the other. Jim Amess, in fact, had a deal where he could only be used in five episodes a year fully and another five he would be in at the beginning and the end and that was it! And he had it written into his contract that he didn't have to be there!



Bill (center, front) as The Scarlet Cyclone, in a TV special spoofing **THE LEGENDS OF THE SUPERHEROES** (NBC-TV, Hanna-Barbera, 1979), with (l to r) The Flash, Burt Ward as Robin, Danuta as The Black Canary, Hawkman, The Huntress, Adam West as Batman, Garrett Craig as Capt. Marvel and The Green Lantern. Watch for a feature on this program in a future issue of **FM**.

the times they are a changin'

RF: The advent of TV opened a lot of doors for a lot of talent, but at the same time it sparked a change in the whole structure of filmmaking.

WS: You know theatre going in this country used to be what people did, one day a week everybody went to the movies. There were double bills. I remember once reading a study by somebody about Hollywood, and they said that they tested this idea of people just going because it was a habit. They would ask people who were lined up to see a movie what they were going to see and they wouldn't know, they would say, "Well, it's Friday night and we go to the movies on Friday night," and they were going to see a double bill, they would also have a cartoon and a newsreel. So that was their entertainment for the week, that was all they saw, and maybe the kids would go on Saturday to see a matinee, but basically that was it—they went once a week to the movies. And there was a regular output from Hollywood for a period there of I don't know how many years, but certainly if you just take the sound era from the beginning of the '30s on up through almost the end of the '40s, that was pretty much true almost for 20 years, that was the way it happened. Then there was a major change with the onset of television, and the motion picture industry basically shut down the better part of one year, in 1952, and then it went back to work and now it was going to produce stuff for television, and in the beginning television was very much like "B" pictures, that was kind of what it was. The "B" picture activities of Hollywood kind of died, and most of it went into making television. There were some that didn't, some of it stayed

Bill as the paramedic who's as befuddled as the police over the strange deaths they discover in **THEM!** (Warner Bros., 1954)





With Robert Clarke in **THE MAN FROM PLANET X**

over, because I worked in a lot of that in the 50s. But by the 60s there was a lot less of that, there was a lot less of the small low budget pictures and double bills were disappearing so they didn't need them anymore, and fundamentally television soaked up that output. So the first 10 years of television, from like '55 to '65 let's say, maybe not even that long, but up until about 1960 television was a beehive of activity—there were 100 series on the air and they were mostly a half-hour, there were only a few hour shows. The people who were actors in the business were working a lot. You didn't make huge amounts of money but you worked, and you could do three shows in a week—two days on one, two days on another, one day on the third, and they'd all be pretty good parts. I mean, I worked in '59 and '60, I don't know whether it's a record, but I worked like 58 times one of those years—58 times on film! And they weren't commercials, there were no commercials in them, it was just episodic television or the occasional feature. So it was possible to work a lot. And major stars in major studios were getting six figure salaries, but certainly nobody was getting a million dollars. These are a few people who made that kind of money, but only because they had participation deals, like Jimmy Stewart and people like that when they first started to do that. But most of the major stars were not, I mean the budget on **THE LONELY OR THE BRAVE** was about two million dollars, for instance, which was enough to make it an A picture. Sometime in the '60s all of that began to go up in an escalating curve and it all

went off the map. Every year the budgets would jump another two or three million dollars. I can remember when it was eight to ten million dollars and that wasn't that long ago, 15 years ago, eight or ten million was considered a huge amount.

a man of parts

RF: You're more remembered in short parts from films like **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN**, **THEM!**, **GOG** than some of the stars.

WS: It's amazing. And when it's been on the air people always tell me, "Oh, I saw you on television in **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN**." And I'm thinking "That was a relatively small part," I did it in one day, I think. I was in about three scenes of the picture, but for some reason or other it's memorable, I don't know why, but it is.

RF: You played in **MIGHTY JOE YOUNG**...

WS: I only had one line in **MIGHTY JOE YOUNG**, but it was a classic line, you know... "Phil 'er up?" in fact, I used to say it was a one line part, but actually it was a one word part. "Phil up" is just one word: "P-h-i-l-e-r-u-p," and that's how it was written too—"Philup." And then I walked to the back of the truck and they had me stand, and then later on they laid in an insert, a mat shot of Mighty Joe Young made the back of the truck, with me reciting to it. In fact, almost every recitation I've had to do has been to things that weren't there. Once in awhile there would be one. I was strangled by a robot in a picture called **GOG**, and the robot was really there for that, they had somebody inside a robot suit.

tobor or not tobor

RF: You were a reporter in **TOBOR, THE GREAT...**

WS: Yes, but I don't remember working with the robot in that. I think I just played a newspaperman asking questions. I just remember getting the call because my agent had another client who got sick, and then he called me and asked me if I was willing to take the job. I would take any job that came along then!

Maybe it's because I've stayed in the business and I'm still alive. I don't know. I assume that surviving long enough tends to put you into an icon category. If you just hang around long enough eventually, if you've done a lot of work, even if it was, at the time, relatively minor work, it doesn't matter, it all adds up and becomes a cumulative thing like a crystal growing or something. I don't know, that's all I can figure. And there are a lot of people who grew up with me, at various stages of my television career, when I was the father of the family on television. That happened every 10 years, in the '60s, the '70s and the '80s, so there are a lot of people who grew up watching me; for however short a time. I was their father figure, and that sticks. You don't get rid of those images when you grow up.

incredible film

RF: It also happens that many of the sci-fi "B" films you're in are today regarded as classics.

WS: I think, again, that is the writer. **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN** was Matheson... It was a Ziegfeld film, and that's why I worked on it, probably. I worked with a very good director, Jack Arnold, who was really a skillful director, and we had a marvelous script. I remember when I read the script I thought,



"Nils Barris—he was a stuffy bureaucrat and a very unpleasant character, I thought—you know, very rigid and stuffy. But he was at least honest. Charlton Heston played my assistant, who turned out to be the villain at least, but the guy I played was just stuffy. I think it's a common attitude that people have toward government bureaucrats anyway, so maybe Shatner in his attitude toward Barris was anticipating the rebellion that has happened in the last couple of years, where nobody wants anything to do with the government anymore." ("The Trouble With Tribbles" episode of **STAR TREK**, Paramount, 1966)

"This is very profound." I mean the concept was profound, because this guy, at the end of the script, he had not finished his travel—he is disappearing into a molecule, which may be another whole universe for him, on a submicroscopic level. There's something very challenging about that concept—is this a form of immortality? When he gets down below, to the ultimate particles, are they the ultimate particles? We think today we've gotten down to the quarks, now that we know what the parts of the atom are that are the smallest things that can be, but not necessarily. That would be the implication of that film. That is an amazingly imaginative concept. And they pursued it all the way to the end. I think that is one reason why that picture stays alive. But it was also very well written. Matheson wrote very believable dialog and it was a very honest picture, and it's surprising that Great Williams didn't go on and do more, because he was very good in it. I suppose it was a "B" picture, but it was done with some quality. I don't remember working on it much, except that I did have one famous line. "People don't get shorter!"

4 week republic-an

RF: You had a part in the *Commando Cody* serial...

WS: I got out of it after about four episodes. At the time I know that the intent was to make a serial that could also be released as a television show, so they would have enough episodes, like 13

episodes, and would make both a serial and the first 13 episodes of a series that could be ongoing if it caught on. It didn't, but there were good reasons for that! The same good reasons that got me out of it, I guess! I remember doing the first four episodes, that's all, and then I couldn't afford to live on what Republic told me they were going to pay me. I hadn't understood what the contract was, so I just said, "Well, tell them I'm not going to do any more." It took them awhile to forgive me for that, and I was not exactly somebody who was rolling in money or anything, it was probably as much money as I was going to make that year, but the fact that that was all I was going to make and knowing what the limits were stifled me. I was born to be a free-lancer, I think; being under contract felt terrible. So, anyway, I didn't go on and make any more. But it reminded me of a live television show I did at the time, which was called "Space Patrol," with a guy named Commander Cody. So Commander Cody always had a suspiciously familiar ring to me, and they said, "Oh, no it has nothing to do with that," but it was as though they were trying to get Commander Cody...but that was only a local show and this was going to go out to the whole country, so I don't know why they were worried about it. Anyway, "Commando Cody" was just like the other one. Commander Cody was like an early version of "Star Trek." I played only villains on that show, and I don't remember much about it. I remember we had this cutout of a rocket ship and there we were standing there and there was the director



As The Admiral (With Don Adams) in "GET SMART."

standing on the floor below us and we were up on the platform and he would just set the camera up and start it to roll and he'd yell at us and tell us to do things. It was almost like a silent film. I mean, that was really done on the cheap.

vocal chords

RP: How did the Milton the Toaster part come about?

WS: I was in the voice-over field. And since that was a commercial, that's a totally separate category of casting and all of that. And I was hot as a pistol. That was the one area of the business where I became a star. The first three or four years I was in that I was as hot as you can get. I started in '66 and in 1970 I was doing everything that was available to do. And somewhere around 1970 was when I auditioned for Milton and got it. But it was about the only cartoon voice I've ever done. "Hi, gang, Milton the Toaster here." And that was based on reading "Winnie the Pooh" to my kids. It was sort of the voice for Winnie the Pooh, kind of a cuddly little bear, except his name was Milton, so I figured, "Well he's from New York," so I made him kind of like that a little fesier. And of course then that got knocked off the air because somebody got a little too creative and they had Milton get sick. And the little girl said, "What's wrong, Milton?" He said, "I don't know, Susie. I'm not feeling too well today." And she says, "Milton, you're running a fever." He says, "Ya, I know, I think I've been working too hard or something." Well, they got about 10 letters at Procter and Gamble, or at General Foods or whatever it was, saying, "How dare you show a small child touching a hot toaster with her bare hand," and they said, "Kill the campaign." They didn't kill the commercial, they got rid of the

toaster, and that was the end of it. And it was too bad because I had had 10 nice years, you know each year I would do about four or five spots and they would run the hell out of them. And it was fun to do. I'm sorry they got creative with it.

RP: The funny thing about TV commercials is the incongruity of seeing you as the All-American Dad then switching channels and you're a villain.

WS: Villains are the most interesting parts. I was never a leading man, so I would either play the buddy of the leading man—sidekicks and things like that where I'd get the funny stuff, and I could do that because comedy has always been natural for me—or otherwise there were the other people, always villains. You know there'd be Steve McQueen and then there'd be a bunch of people, they were either townspeople or they were killers. And the most interesting parts were always the killers, so I always hoped I would get those. Because I could do a range of parts and I could do a range of accents and things like that, I've played all kinds of stuff over the years—Swedish farmers and aliens with strange accents, Venetian accents, French and German characters...

set 'em up, joe

RP: Did that have anything to do with Joe Dante casting you in his films?

WS: Joe wanted to use people that he'd grown up watching. And he thought it added a certain quality to the picture that he wanted to have in it. You know, the ultimate example of that was the stuff in *MATINEE*, where we did this separate film that was like a parody of what we used to do. And it was actually better than the rest of the film, I mean, it was the best thing about *MATINEE*. But the first time I worked for Joe was in the *TWILIGHT ZONE*, the movie, in that episode, a famous one of Richard Matheson's, I think it was called, "The Corn Patch." It was about a kid who was able, when people gave him trouble, to send them out to the corn patch.

RP: That was the one Biffy Mumy did?

WS: Right, and then Biffy Mumy played an adult at the revival. It was the same situation, but now instead of sending them out...like a girl crossed him and he just sealed her mouth up. And the family had to live in this crazy house, it was like a cartoon; everything in it was forced perspective, there was nothing sane in the house, the whole house was insane and everybody in it was at the mercy of this kid, and he would torment them with these monsters. It was the same idea, but now it was technologically expanded. But also Joe did a very interesting thing, because he used kind of a German expressionist technique in the way the sets were done. He really made a distorted reality there, which I thought was a very creative approach. The other one was spooky because it was so banal and so ordinary, people were so ordinary in the black and white screen on television, dealing with a problem that was very average. We were in a situation that was like a cartoon. In fact, that was, I guess, the image he used, that it was like we were in a cartoon world, and that's a very interesting take on it. But I guess he wanted me because I was part of the old order, and Kevin McCarthy and me and Patricia Barry and the older people in it were all people whom he had seen before and had liked, obviously. He used me in several pictures, but that was the one where it was most clear what the reason was, that and *MATINEE*; in both



of those I obviously was sort of a token from the past that he admired, that he liked. It was kind of nice. Joe was always fun to work for. I worked on *GREMLINS* but nobody knows I'm in it because they only left a little bit of it, but I spent a day on *GREMLINS* working with him. He didn't have a dialog so we improvised it. And I played that old guy that I do, you know, kind of like the admiral, and we had a lot of funny stuff, really funny stuff, but it was irrelevant to the story and so it all got cut. They used one tiny scene of me at the mailbox, where Dobie Carey comes up to the mailbox and I've seen something weird about it and I don't like it. I play this priest, you know. He comes up and he says, "Are you finished yet?" He was very unpleasant. I said, "Oh, please, go ahead," I guess, and he gets sucked into the mailbox. Sort of like consequence in a way.

no preference

RP: Do you prefer doing sci-fi or fantasy films over other types of parts?

WS: No, they were jobs. That's how I made my living. I made an adjustment early on in my career. I said, "Well, I've got a wife and three children," (at that time), and I said, "Well, you know, this is how I make my living." "I don't know whether I'll ever be a star or not, that's in the lap of the gods," you don't know how that's going to happen anyway, nobody controls that. "So meanwhile I have to work." Whatever I could do to work was fine by me. And science fiction was at least as interesting as the other stuff, and much more comfortable than doing a western. I hated getting up at 5:00 in the morning and going out to some distant location and spending the day on horseback and living with dust and all of that. And it was always either bitter cold or boiling hot. At least in science fiction you were on a sound stage.

RP: Have you directed or wanted to direct?

WS: No, that's for people who have a desire to be a boss, to run things. I've just always wanted to be an actor.

And for more than 4 decades of memorable performances, the movie world is grateful, Bill.

As Mr. Pomfret in "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis" TV show.

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Kenneth Fosler of Costa Mesa, CA writes: "One of my favorite horrors is when we first see Karloff as the Mummy. Problem is Boris has so little time on screen as the Mummy. Could Dr. Acula provide me with a nice shot of Karloff from that scene?" Sure thing, Ken. And since we're still in the X-Mas spirit, here's Boris, all wrapped up!

Sharon Ashley of Bridgeport, CT asked if it was true that *MYSTERIOUS ISLAND* was made into a movie prior to the Harryhausen version. Indeed it is. Before Harryhausen's animagic the Jules Verne story was adapted to film back in the silent days. Here's a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the SPIFX of those days for an underwater sequence. Thanks for Sharon your curiosity with us.

Vintage foto collector Roger Hurlbert of Fort Lauderdale, Florida sent a still of Henry (*WEREWOLF OF LONDON*) Hull from his collection to supplement the shot we ran in FM #209. This one is of Hull taken in 1924. Thanks for sharing it, Roger!

Publisher's note: Australian reader Stephan Muller sent us a correction to a foto we ran in FM #206 of Boris Karloff and some visitors to the set of *THE MASK OF FU MANCHU*—the group with Boris is the Australian Cricket team (note Australian Cricket great Don Bradman, third person to Myrna Loy's left in the foto) not the British team as was credited.



(Continued from page 7).....
cation in Famous Monsters!

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JEFF PRIPUSICH
Bolingbrook IL

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LES BENTON

THE UNKINDEST CUTS OF ALL

It must be Halloween, because, as usual, Sci-Fi is showing horror classics heavily edited. The Karloff MUMMY had about 4 minutes cut while the Lugosi DRACULA had no less than 7 (!) minutes missing.

What a shame channel programmers have no respect for the craftspeople who made these films, or for the people who watch them. Horror and sci-fi fans love these films, and tend to know them backwards and forwards. When they are shown cut, you run the very real risk of alienating and losing your audience. You can show these films in a time slot long

enough to accommodate the movie's running time, plus commercials, so why don't?

I, for one, have had it with the Sci-Fi Channel's B.S. Time to renew my membership at Blockbuster, and bid the channel a not so fond farewell.

DAVID NAHMOD
Hoboken NJ

* You might be too young to know that once upon a time cable channels didn't chop up their film presentations because they had NO COMMERCIALS! The idea was that since subscribers were paying to receive the channel, they didn't want to pay to watch advertisements. Wasn't that a novel concept? The only reason the non-broadcast cable channels get away with running so many commercials and charging viewers for the privilege of seeing them is that the viewers allow them to. Unfortunately, American TV viewers aren't known for standing up for their rights. In the case of the channel you mention by name, here in Horrorwood, at least, almost half of their program day is devoted to infomercials and another third is regular commercials. What programs they do show are filler to keep the commercials from running together. Check your TV listings each week and just tune in to American Movie Classics. You'll save yourself a

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MYSTERY PHOTO #211

This little fellow seems to be having a problem. The young lady might be the gorilla his dreams. If he's taking her somewhere fancy, he's certainly dressed appropriately. What do you see in this simian scene? Here's a chance to match wits with Dr. Acule's fractured phrases. Let loose your imagination and take a crack at writing a silly caption for the unidentified scene shown above. In our #212 issue, we'll provide the picture's particulars along with the best twisted captions suggested by the foto.



Send a POSTCARD only (postmarked by March 25, 1986) with your suggestion to: FAMOUS MONSTERS, Dept. Miss Terry #211, 16161 Nordhoff St., Crypt #480, North Hills, CA 91343. The best submission will win its author a place of honor in next issue's Mystery Photo page plus a surprise gift from FM's Captain Company Monster Mail Order!

CAPTIONS FOR MYSTERY PHOTO #210

From Jeff Kuris of Ironwood, MI
Criswell predicts, "The sun will rise this morning, the birds will chirp." Tor Johnson is amazed at his accuracy.

From Tom Reynolds of N. Bend, OH
During their game of Hide & Go Shneek, Criswell is startled that Tor Johnson found him so quickly.

From Lynn Dylachowski of Toms River, NJ for
"Just back from an early morning fishing trip, Tor Johnson tells Criswell all about the one that got away."

The photo, of course, is of Tor Johnson and Criswell in NIGHT OF THE GHOULS (1962).



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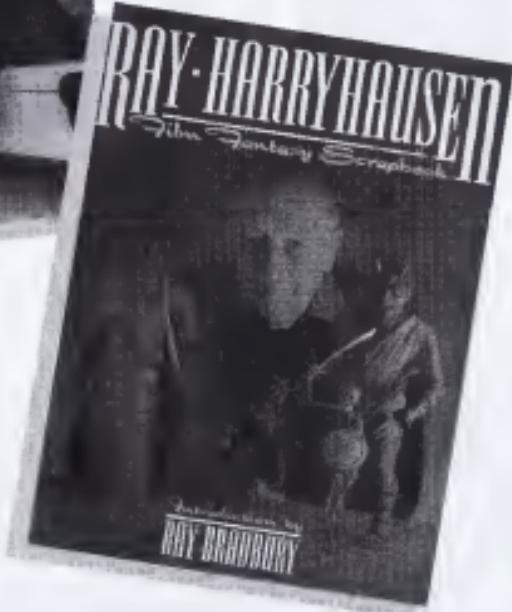
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—Ray Ferry, Publisher

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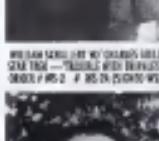
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THE GHOULISH AGE OF HORROR RADIO

SHOCK!

THE GHOULISH AGE OF RADIO

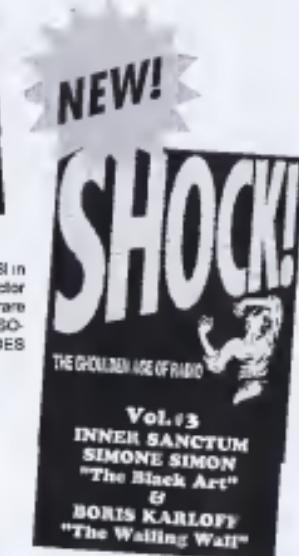
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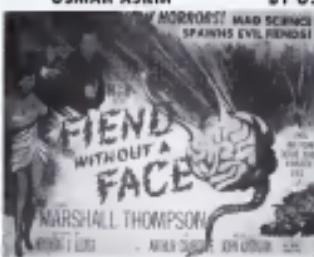
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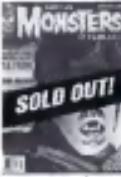
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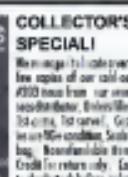
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